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**SKETCHES**  
**FROM**  
**CHURCH HISTORY**  
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**BY**  
**CORNELIUS H. WEDEL,**  
**Late Professor in Bethel College.**

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**Translated by**  
**GUSTAV A. HAURY,**  
**Professor in Bethel College.**

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**Published by Direction of**  
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**OF MENNONITES OF NORTH AMERICA**

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## PREFACE

The purpose of this little volume is to offer not what the pupil should hear in his classes, nor what the teacher should know, but what the former should learn and take with him from school and should use as a nucleus around which to gather further knowledge. Because of the fact that only a short time can be devoted to this study in school, it is self-evident that the amount of matter presented must be very limited. The teacher should let the class read each new paragraph and should explain such words and sentences as are not understood by the pupils. Then the pupils should close their books while the teacher enlarges upon the subject-matter of the text-book. This method will naturally arouse the interest of the pupils. The teacher, however, must guard against presenting too much outside matter. During the following recitation period he must expect the pupils to know what is given in the text-book. If they can give anything definite of what he added, they should be especially commended. It is scarcely necessary to warn against a discussion of the peculiarities distinguishing the various branches of our denomination. For that reason every occasion for such discussion has been avoided in this book. Short devotional meditations and applications are appropriate. They, however, will make deeper impressions if they are presented orally by the teacher instead of being read out of the text-book. We hope that this little volume will prove helpful in our schools.

## COMMITTEE'S PREFACE

The 27th annual session of the Western District Conference of the Mennonites of North America, held at Pawnee Rock, Kans., in 1918, instructed its Committee on Schools and Education to provide suitable text books in the English language for use in our elementary religious schools, preparatory schools, academies and colleges. The committee felt that the needs of our elementary religious schools should be met first. Investigation showed that a number of books were already in the field, which could be used advantageously in such schools, but in the field of Church History nothing adapted to our needs seemed available. The Committee accordingly arranged for the translation of this little book, which in the original, had abundantly demonstrated its usefulness in our elementary religious schools.

The Committee desires publicly to express its thanks to the persons who so willingly co-operated with it, by placing at its disposal the material necessary to bring the history of Mennonite missions down to the present time, and include a brief outline of the missionary work of other branches of the Mennonite church. It is hoped that this feature will add to the interest and to the usefulness of the book.

May this little volume become a means of giving to many of our children such a clear understanding of, and genuine love for, the church, that they will be led to accept its Founder, Who Himself was the greatest friend of children, as their Lord and Savior.

THE COMMITTEE.



## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

For twenty years the German edition of this little book has served the purpose of religious instruction in the schools of our churches. In course of time, however, it has become evident that if such instruction is to continue it must be given in the language of our country. The Committee on Schools and Education of the Western District Conference therefore recommended the translation of such books as would be found helpful to the cause. The recommendation was received favorably by the Conference and, as a result, the translation of Professor Wedel's Sketches of Church History is now put into the hands of our children.

In making the translation no effort was made to depart from the original text, with the exception that only in a few places slight changes were thought necessary. The history of our missions, however, was brought up to the present time. Likewise, brief accounts of missionary activities of other branches of our denomination have been added. It is hoped that because of this fact this little book may find a wider use than just within the confines of our own schools. May the book help to stimulate the interest in religious education, the need of which has become so imperative in these disturbed days.

GUSTAV A. HAURY.

Newton, Kansas, February, 1920.

# 1. The First Centuries.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION.

The Christian Church is the great institution of salvation which Christ has founded in order to further the spiritual life of his followers and to bring his Gospel to all the nations. Christ has founded the Church; he is therefore its head, and only that person truly belongs to the Church who has become Christ's own. The Holy Spirit, however, guides the Church and bestows upon all believers the blessings of salvation won by Christ for humanity. He does this if anyone receives the Word of God into his heart and is obedient to it. Therefore we call the Word of God, or the preaching of the Gospel, also a means of grace. But the Christian receives special assurance of divine grace, likewise through the Holy Spirit, in the sacraments of the Church—baptism and the Lord's Supper. All those, therefore, who believe in Christ shall labor for him and shall tell others how good it is to become one of Christ's flock. Consequently, God has founded the Church with the purpose that through it salvation may be brought to all mankind.

Besides getting a knowledge of the stories of the Bible, Christian young people should become acquainted with the main events of Church History; for it is the continuation of the history of God's

Kingdom as it appears in the Old and the New Testament. In Church History we find a continuous glorification of Christ and a proof of the divine origin of Christianity. All attacks from without by the enemies of the Church and all heresies from within, spread by false and erring Christians, could not destroy it. It has always grown and spread out more and more and has brought both temporal and spiritual blessings to the nations. Only there conditions became happy and prosperous where the people came under the influence and guidance of the Church. Furthermore, in Church History we learn to know a larger number of pious men who have confessed Christ in word and deed, and who, in many respects, may serve as examples of Christian life. On the other hand, we also find examples that warn us how easy it is to go astray if one does not surrender himself fully to the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord. In consideration of such facts, a knowledge of Church History may bring us great blessings.

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## 2. THE APOSTLES.

**Ambassadors of Jesus Christ.** Our Lord only began his work on earth; his apostles should continue it. In his last charge to them he appointed them his messengers to all nations. On the day of the first Pentecost he endowed them with his spirit. Now they could bear witness for him with joy and courage. Through miracles and signs they proved their divine mission. Yet the Jews soon began to hate and persecute them, but that only served to increase their courage. They rejoiced to suffer for their Master.

**The Apostle Peter** won 3000 souls to the Church with his sermon on the day of the first Pentecost. At first he remained at Jerusalem. Afterwards he labored in Lydda, Joppa and Antioch, and after the year 50 in Asia Minor and Babylon, from where he wrote his first epistle. Later he came to Rome and there suffered death on the cross during the persecutions under Nero.

**James, a Brother of John**, was the first one of the disciples to die a martyr's death. In the year 44 King Herod Agrippa ordered him to be beheaded.

**James the Just** probably was a brother of our Lord and perhaps believed in him only after his resurrection. Later he became bishop of the church in Jerusalem and distinguished himself by a strict observance of the Jewish law. In the year 64 the Jewish council ordered him to be taken to the pinnacle of the temple and demanded that he should curse Christ. When he refused to do this, they cast him down, and as he lay on the ground he prayed for his enemies. At last a priest killed him with a club.

**Paul** was not one of the Twelve. The Lord had revealed himself to him in a peculiar manner near Damascus, and the proud Pharisee and fierce persecutor of Christians was changed into a humble servant of Christ. In three missionary journeys he carried the Gospel into Asia Minor and Greece. In the year 61 he was brought to Rome as a prisoner and here, in the year 64 or 67, he was beheaded by order of Nero. The Roman emperor Nero had caused Rome to be set on fire and then charged the Christians with the act. In consequence, many of them were tortured in a horrible manner and killed.

**John** first labored together with Peter in Jerusalem and Samaria. After the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70, he went to Ephesus and from there directed the various churches in Asia Minor. He was then banished to the island Patmos, where he received the revelation and where he wrote his gospel. He is known as the Apostle of Love. At one time, in a certain church, he found a handsome, noble youth whom he won for Christianity and committed to the care of the bishop. But the young man yielded himself to wild dissipations and finally became the chief of a band of robbers. When John at a later visit inquired after him, the bishop said with tears, "He is dead; he has departed from God." Then the apostle hastened into the mountains, permitted himself to be captured by the robbers and demanded to be led to their chief. When the youth saw the venerable apostle coming towards him, he was ashamed and fled. John, however, followed him and exclaimed, "Why do you flee, my son? Christ has sent me to you." Then the youth burst into tears and willingly returned with the apostle. In the year 99 or 100 John died.

The assistants of the apostles continued the work. Barnabas, Silas, Luke, Timothy and Titus were the companions of Paul. Luke wrote the third gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. Timothy was ordained by Paul as bishop of the church in Ephesus and Titus as bishop of Crete. Mark assisted both Paul and Peter. Besides these helpers already mentioned there were many others.

**Heathendom** was ready for the Gospel, which on that account spread very rapidly. As far as the world was concerned, outwardly there was



peace, and because of that fact the messengers of Christ could travel without hindrance. Many of the heathen had lost faith in their gods, and the Jews, who were found everywhere, shed much light through the practice of their religion. Many of the heathen, particularly women, regularly attended the synagogues. Many of these were converted, and thus the Gospel quickly spread.

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### 3. THE CONDUCT OF THE CHRISTIANS.

A great change took place in those who renounced the heathen religion and became Christians. The heathen bowed down before lifeless idols; the Christians worshipped God in truth and in spirit. The heathen thought only of themselves and their life was a continual chase after pleasure. The cultured Romans could see with a great deal of enjoyment how people were torn to pieces by wild beasts in the theatres and they treated their slaves with great cruelty. They had no compassion for the poor and the sick and none for little children and widows. The Christians did not go to the theatres; to help the suffering and the poor was their delight. Quietly and humbly they went their own ways. They loved even their enemies.

The churches had a simple organization. At the head stood the bishops and the elders, who preached and taught. Next to them were the deacons, who took care of the poor. There were also deaconesses to nurse the sick. They were all united by the holy ties of love in such a manner that the heathen often exclaimed, "See how they love one another."

The meetings were soon generally held on Sunday, because on that day the Lord rose from the dead. On that day they prayed while standing and at other times mostly while on their knees. They met in private houses, and in times of persecution often at night, in caves and in forests. In their meetings they sang and prayed, explained the Holy Scriptures and frequently celebrated the Lord's Supper, before which, however, they had what they called a love feast, for which each one brought something from home. Then the rich ate of the bread of the poor and the poor slave partook of the fare of the rich brother. During the meal they conversed about holy things.

Baptism was administered only upon those that had experienced a change within. If anyone conducted himself in a manner unworthy of his confession, the church exercised strict discipline. Notorious sinners and such that denied Christ in persecution were excluded from the church.

Some Christian festivals were instituted quite early. The first was Epiphany as the day of the heathen and the baptism of Christ. Then came Easter and Pentecost. Christmas began to be celebrated at a later time.

Prayer was regarded as very important among the early Christians. They called it the taking of breath of the spiritual man. It was the soul of the Christian life and the rampart of faith. Their special times of prayer were in the morning and in the evening and when they sat down at meals. Thus their life was a serious one and yet joyful because they had peace in their hearts and had consecrated themselves to God.

#### 4. PERSECUTIONS.

**Causes.** The Jews from the very beginning were hostile towards the Christians. When the Christians began to increase everywhere, the heathen also began to hate them. Their clean and blameless lives condemned the wicked ways of the heathen. These then invented all kinds of stories about them and said that the Christians practiced shameful vices at their meetings. Because they would not worship any idols, their enemies asserted that they had no religion at all. Above all, the priests accused them that they aroused the anger of the gods. When an earthquake or a famine took place, or when the Nile in Egypt did not flood the fields sufficiently, the people said, "The Christians are the cause of it. To the lions with the Christians." But the educated classes saw in Christianity a dangerous superstition which should be punished with death. The emperors, on the other hand, feared that the Christian religion would destroy the unity of the empire, especially since many of the Christians refused to perform military service. When they also refused to regard the emperors as gods and to burn incense before them, they were persecuted.

**Chief Persecutions.** The Roman emperor Nero (37-68) was the first one to persecute the Christians. Domitian (81-96) heard that relatives of Jesus were still to be found in Palestine and he directed that they should be brought to him. But when he saw their calloused hands, a condition indicating hard labor, he dismissed them with contempt, saying that from such people no danger to his crown need be feared. He nevertheless caused the Christians to be persecuted. Trajan (98-117) decreed that if anyone



became a Christian, it should be regarded as an act of treason. Marcus Aurelius (161-180) issued an order that anyone who informed against a Christian should get a part of his property as a reward. Decius (249-251) caused a severe persecution and ordered that the teachers especially should be taken. The severest persecution, however, took place under Diocletian (284-305). By his orders all bibles were to be given up, churches were torn down, entire villages were set on fire and many Christians burned.

**In Confessing Their Master** the Christians showed showed great courage. They suffered horrible tortures; they were tormented on red-hot chairs; they were sent to the mines to work and were left to perish; they were thrown before wild beasts or burned at the stake. A few denied their Lord, but the most of them remained steadfast, even children, weak girls and women. This made a deep impression upon many of the heathen, especially when some Christians, even in their dying moments, prayed for their enemies. The blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church, and many unbelievers were turned to Christ on the place of execution.

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## 5. MARTYRS.

Ignatius was one of the many who suffered death because of their belief and on that account were called martyrs; that is, witnesses. He was the bishop of Antioch and had been a disciple of the Apostle John. Emperor Trajan during his travels also came to Antioch and ordered Ignatius to be brought before him.

“Who art thou, wicked Christian, that thou darest resist my laws?” cried the emperor. But Ignatius spoke freely and boldly of Christ, his crucified Lord, to whom he devoted his life. The emperor then commanded that he should be brought to Rome and there thrown to the wild beasts. The old man endured the hardships of the journey with great fortitude. “I am a grain of wheat,” he said, “and I must be ground between the teeth of the wild beasts that I may prove to be the pure bread.” In the arena he did not look at the animals but directed his eyes towards heaven and prayed until he was torn by the beasts. This happened in the year 107.

Polycarp, also a disciple of John, was bishop at Smyrna and in 167 died a martyr's death. Here, during the reign of the emperor Marcus Aurelius, a severe persecution broke out and the rabble demanded the death of the venerable bishop. They finally found him at a country home, to which some friends had brought him for safety. Calmly and cheerfully he said that something to eat and drink should be given to his captors, and as they ate he sought strength in prayer. On his way to the place of execution officers of the emperor took him into their carriage and advised him to deny Christ to save his life. But when he refused to do this he was thrown out of the carriage and suffered severe injuries. The governor also said, “Curse Christ and I will let you go.” The bishop, however, replied, “I have served my Lord eighty-six years; how could I curse my King, who has redeemed me.” He was frightened neither by the wild beasts nor by the fire, and the angry mob fiercely demanded his death. At last he was placed on a pile of wood to be burned

and he prayed, "I thank thee, God, that thou permittest me to be counted among thy witnesses and to partake of the cup of thy Christ." When the flames did not immediately reach him, the executioner approached and pierced him with a weapon.

In Vienne and Lyons, in Southern France, the aged bishop **Pothinus**, who was past his ninetyeth year, was taken before the magistrate. He asked the bishop who was the god of the Christians. The aged man replied, "If thou art worthy, thou wilt learn it." Without further ado he was dragged by his feet to prison, where he died in two days in consequence of his brutal treatment. A young female slave, **Blondina** by name, was cruelly tortured. They tried to make her confess that the things of which the heathen accused the Christians were true. They said, for instance, that the Christians in their meetings ate the flesh of little children and that they practiced other wicked things. But they could force no other confession from her than this: "I am a Christian; among us no evil is done." She was roasted on a red-hot chair, but she remained true to her faith. Finally she was put into a net and thrown before a fierce bull, which killed her with his horns.

**Perpetua** was the daughter of a nobleman in Carthage. Because of her intercourse with Christians she was thrown into prison, where she was baptized. Her young child was taken away from her, yet she remained firm. Her aged father fell down on his knees before her and entreated her to pity him and to renounce her faith. She, however, remained unmoved, and, in the year 200, was thrown before a wild cow and was killed.

**Pionius** was a presbyter, or elder, in Smyrna. During the persecution under Decius he was also taken and brought before the magistrate, who demanded that he should sacrifice to the gods. Some of the Christians had already done so, among them even a bishop. But Pionius defended his faith with such skill that the people exclaimed, "Pionius, thou art worthy to live, and life is sweet. Be persuaded to renounce thy faith and sacrifice to the gods." But when he refused they nailed him to a stake to burn him. Then the magistrate said that the nails could still be drawn out if he should change his mind. But Pionius replied, "I have felt them," and joyfully suffered death.

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## 6. NOTED TEACHERS.

**Justin.** Among the men who in these times were a particular blessing to the Church, who in their writings defended the Christian religion and who as teachers and bishops watched over the doctrine and conduct of the churches, Justin, also called Justin Martyr, occupied a prominent position. He was born at ancient Sichem. In his youth he had the opportunity to admire the courage with which the Christians confessed their faith and suffered the cruelties inflicted upon them by the Jews, who had revolted against the Roman emperor and thereby got the chance to vent their spite on the Christians. Later he studied philosophy under various teachers, but he was not satisfied because he did not find with them the true knowledge. He felt a longing for peace with God, and this no learning can satisfy. Once, while on a lonely

walk near the sea, he met an old man, who pointed out to him the way to Christ. Justin now read the Holy Scriptures and was converted to the Lord. He became a teacher and wrote several treatises in which he showed the heathen how unjust it was to persecute the Christians. He was called the Christian in the philosopher's mantle. In the year 163 he was put to death in Rome by order of Marcus Aurelius.

Tertullian was a serious-minded and gifted bishop at Carthage. In his youth he led a dissipated life and was educated as a lawyer. Soon after his conversion he was elected bishop. At that time the Church enjoyed a rest from persecution, consequently many were found who were Christians only in name. Some were drawn into sinful amusements; they attended the games at the theaters; they became slaves to beautiful clothes and an extravagant mode of life. Tertullian vigorously attacked these evil tendencies and reminded the people that on any day a persecution might break out, and asked whether they would then be willing to put upon the block the neck which they were now adorning with pearls. He also exercised strict church discipline and would admit no one whom he had once excluded. In various writings he pointed out to the heathen that Christianity offered to them what they had been longing for in their hearts and that only with Christ they could find peace. He regarded military service as decidedly wrong and was against infant baptism, which began to be practiced at that time. He died in the year 220 after a life of great usefulness.

Cyprian also was a noted bishop of Carthage. Before his conversion he had been a teacher of rhetor-



ic. When he became a Christian, he gave all his worldly goods to the poor that he might the better serve Christ. Soon after, the church elected him bishop, and when the persecutions broke out under Decius, he proved to be a man of strong faith and honor in his position. Many of those belonging to his church denied Christ and were excluded by him from membership. He was unwearied in his attention to the sick and the poor. Finally he was also seized and when he refused to sacrifice to the gods he was immediately condemned to death. Many followed him on his way to execution and cried, "We want to die with our bishop." In the year 258 he was beheaded.

Origen of Alexandria showed such great piety already in his childhood that his father, Leonidas, regarded his breast as the temple of the Holy Spirit. When his father was thrown into prison, Origen wanted to die with him for Christ. His mother could keep him back only by hiding his clothes. Leonidas was executed and left his family in great poverty. Origen, however, soon was able to care for the family, since he became a teacher in a Christian school which flourished in Alexandria and was attended by many pupils. He wrote many books, of which a few still exist. The envy of his bishop drove him out of Alexandria and he went to Caesarea in Palestine, where he also had many pupils. He even corresponded with the Roman empress regarding the teachings of Christianity. During the persecution under Decius he suffered cruel tortures in consequence of which he died in 254.

## 7. CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.

**His Victories.** Diocletian had associated with himself several men who were to rule over certain districts of the vast Roman empire. Among these were Constantius in the West and Galerius in the East. The latter caused the Christians to be cruelly persecuted, while the former left them in peace. He said that such people who were faithful to their god would also be faithful to their emperor. In the year 306 he was followed by his son Constantine, afterwards called the Great, who continued his father's policy towards the Christians. Between him and a rival emperor a decisive battle was fought near Rome. Before the battle he is said to have seen a cross in the afternoon sky with this inscription: "In this sign you will conquer." He also related that Christ had appeared to him in the night and commanded him to adopt the standard of the cross. Under this standard he then won a complete victory in the year 312, and after this he became the distinct champion of Christianity. Later he defeated Licinius, his co-regent in the East, who fiercely hated the Christians. As a result, Constantine became ruler of the whole Roman empire.

In 323 Constantine made Christianity the state religion. The most important offices were given to Christians, and the emperor's sons were educated by bishops. The bishops obtained the income and the privileges of the heathen priests and were almost overwhelmed with honors. The emperor built many churches at his own expense and ordered fifty copies of the Bible to be made and distributed among the churches. His mother, Helena, journeyed to Jerusalem and there built a church over the supposed sepulchre of Christ.

In order not to be obliged to live in the heathenish city of Rome, Constantine built a new city and called it Constantinople, and in this city he permitted only the Christian religion. Through his influence a great change came about. The heathen religion lost its power and Christian ideas began to prevail everywhere.

**The Council of Nicea** was a conference of bishops who met in the year 325 at the request of Constantine in order to decide an important question that had arisen in the Church. Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, taught that Christ was created by the Father and was only of a like essence with Him. The venerable bishops, however, many of whom bore the scars of torture on their bodies, rejected his doctrine and declared that Christ is truly born as God and not created, and therefore is of the same essence with the Father.

Constantine died in 337. Not until he lay on on his deathbed, however, was he baptized by Bishop Eusebius; for he was of the opinion that sins committed after baptism were greater than those committed before. After he was baptized he refused to wear his mantle of purple. His life was far from blameless, since he was unable to control his passions. Yet, in spite of his blemishes, he showed that Christianity was a serious matter with him.

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## 8. THE CHURCH FATHERS.

**Chrysestom.** The most noted bishops of the Primitive Church are called the Church Fathers. Among the foremost to be mentioned is John Chrysos-



tom. He was born in Antioch. His pious mother, Anthusa, led him to Christ in the early days of his youth. She sent him to the heathen schools, yet, due to her prayers and his own religious inclination, he remained an earnest Christian. The church called him to preach and he soon developed such ability as a speaker that he was called Chrysostomus, "the golden-mouthed one." Because of his eloquence he was called as bishop to Constantinople, where the descendents of Constantine were in power. One of these, Julian, had made an effort to reinstate the heathen religion and failed, and not long afterwards, in the year 363, he was killed in a war with the Persians. When Chrysostom entered upon his duties as bishop, the emperor that ruled then, outwardly confessed Christ, but at his court luxury and heathenish vices prevailed. The empress especially was devoted to pleasure and vanity. Chrysostom sternly rebuked the sins of the court and insisted on a consecrated life. He even declared against military service and the oath. All this aroused the hatred of the courtiers against him and, above all, the queen demanded his banishment. Even some envious bishops desired his removal, and he was at last banished to the Caucasus, where he died in 407 with the words: "God be praised for everything."

Ambrose (340-397) was an imperial magistrate at Milan when the bishop of the church there died. The people came together to elect a new bishop and Ambrose also appeared to keep order. Suddenly a child exclaimed, "Ambrose must become bishop," and the whole assembly immediately joined in the cry and greeted him as bishop. In astonishment he declared that although he was a Christian at heart he had not

yet been baptized. But that did not matter to the people and they insisted that he should accept the office. He then became a member of the church and entered upon the duties of his office with great zeal. In order to prepare himself, he devoted even a part of the night to the study of the Holy Scriptures. The golden vessels used in communion he sold and replaced them with inexpensive ones and the money realized from the sale he employed to ransom prisoners. His private fortune he gave to the poor. In church discipline he was very strict; he compelled even the emperor Theodosius to do penance in public. In 397 he died after a comparatively short activity, yet through the influence of his life and work he was a great blessing to the entire West.

Augustine (354-430) was the most distinguished teacher of the Church. He was born in 354 at Tagaste in North Africa. His mother, Monica, was a very pious woman and in his early days had consecrated him to God. His father, however, was a pagan and had different plans for his son. As Augustine proved to be a talented boy, his father sent him to the best schools. So in his seventeenth year he attended the school at Carthage and advanced rapidly in the study of grammar and rhetoric. But in his private life he was not at all exemplary, for he fell into grievous sins and vices. His pious mother, with her heart full of sorrow, almost gave up hope, but her bishop consoled her and said that a son of so many tears could not be lost. Augustine himself came to the conclusion that he could not continue in his evil ways. Then, instead of turning directly to Christ, he permitted himself to be drawn into the delusions of the

Manichean doctrine, which greatly appealed to him. In order to get more money and honor as a teacher of rhetoric, he went first to Rome and then to Milan, in spite of the entreaties of his mother. At the latter place he was attracted by the eloquence of Ambrose, whom he heard quite often. Finally the moment came when he made his decision for Christ. Once, when he was praying in the solitude of a garden, he heard the voice of a child exclaim, "Take and read." He then opened the Bible and found the passage in Romans 13:13, 14, which pointed out the way that he must go in order to be delivered from the servitude of sin. He returned to Africa, and after a few years of quiet retirement he was chosen first as priest and then as bishop by the church at Hippo. The duties of this office he performed with great faithfulness. He vigorously contested the doctrine of Pelagius, who taught that man was born without sin and that Christ was not the redeemer, but only an ideal man. Yet he himself was also guilty of some errors; for instance, he declared that all unbaptized children were lost, and for that reason insisted on infant baptism. In the year 430 he died, during the time when Hippo was besieged by the Vandals.

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## II. The Middle Ages.

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### 9. ERRORS.

**Doctrinal Errors.** Together with the change of the external conditions of the Church there also

came about a change from within. Instead of insisting upon an experience of the grace of God in the heart, they put great stress upon mere confession. At their church councils they quarreled in the most disgraceful manner over theological questions, such as, whether Christ had two wills or not, frequently emphasizing their arguments with their fists. The worst, however, was that the decisions of these councils were accepted as the laws of the state and anyone that did not agree with them was regarded as a criminal. Public worship, in its outward form, became very elaborate; candles were lighted, incense was burned, and pictures of Christ and the Virgin Mary were hung on walls and pillars. First the people prayed before the pictures, but soon worshipped them as divine, and thus a new paganism arose in the Church. Infant baptism was introduced because they declared that it was necessary for salvation.

The Bishops did not remain what they should have been; namely, shepherds of the Church and also brethren in them. In quite early times they were honored in such a manner that they rose to the rank of the nobility. In their own circles different grades of rank developed so that some were subordinate to others. The presbyters and deacons no longer were their fellow workers but were regarded as their servants. The question now arose who of the bishops should be the first one and should exercise authority over the others. In the West the bishop of Rome began to be regarded as superior in rank and was soon called Pope, that is, Papa. In the East, the bishops of Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem, etc., took first place and were called patriarchs. Their quarrels often

indicated that the care for the spiritual welfare was not the main issue with them, but rather the desire for wealth and honor.

**The private life** of the Christians now also began to change and conform to the world. Although the people still went to church, they also attended the shows in the amphitheater and took part in many pagan amusements. Many who went by the name of Christians were guilty of lying, cheating and abominable vices. No church discipline was exercised any more and with many Christianity was only a name.

**Monasticism.** In order to escape from persecution, a Christian youth, Paulus by name, in the year 250 fled from Thebes in Egypt into the desert and remained there in solitude until his death. Soon others followed his example and thought that such a secluded life was a better service to God than to engage in some calling in the midst of the people. Very prominent as a hermit was Anthony, also of Thebes. About the year 270 he built a wall around the huts of a number of such hermits. This enclosed place was then called a cloister and the inmates of it monks. In a short time hundreds of such cloisters came into existence in Egypt, Syria and other places. While many chose such a life with good intentions, the majority had the mistaken idea that they could earn their salvation most easily in that manner.

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## 10. EARLY REFORMERS.

**Priscillian.** The very fact that such errors were opposed by pious men who earnestly and firmly



engaged to retain the simplicity and faith of the Primitive Church, was a proof of the divine origin of Christianity. Among these men we note especially a noble and rich, yet pious and zealous, layman named Priscillian, who lived in Spain in the fourth century. He conducted meetings in his own house with such success and blessings that many looked upon him as their spiritual leader. He and his followers intended to serve the Lord as the first Christians had done. They strongly opposed the authority of the bishops and lamented the worldly life of the Christians and the lack of Church discipline. They placed great emphasis on baptism administered on the confession of faith, and believed that the Holy Spirit dwelt also among the lay members of the church, not only among the clergy. They demanded and themselves practiced a holy life. In consequence, they soon had to suffer much sorrow and distress and were accused of being the worst of sinners and teachers of false doctrine. Even the bishop brought a charge against them before the emperor, who then sanctioned their punishment with death. Priscillian himself suffered death in 385 at Treves, but his followers were known for several centuries. This was the first case that the Church punished such with death who had departed from the accepted order and teachings. Many bishops were indignant at this outrage and declared that it was a disgrace to the Church. Their protest, however, was soon forgotten.

**Claudius of Turin** lived in the ninth century. In that part of Italy the bishop of Rome had very little influence and therefore a purer form of worship could develop. Claudius took a stand against a number of

errors common at that time. In regard to the superstitious veneration of the cross he said that if they wanted to worship the cross, they ought also to worship the manger because Christ had lain in it, and the ass because he had ridden on it. In reply to the demands of the Roman bishop he said, "Not he is apostolic who sits in the apostles' chair, but he who follows them in an apostolic life." Just as firmly he declared against the superstitious worship of the bones of the saints; that is, of the martyrs and other pious Christians. He died in 839.

Small Communities, in addition to these noted men, were also found which separated from the Church and practiced a simple worship without the splendor usual at that time. In the North of Africa, in Mesopotamia, and in Bulgaria, they flourished and quietly lived faithful to their belief. Especially in the mountains west of Turin, many remained faithful to the teachings of Claudius and even spread them in the South of France.

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## 11. THE ISLAM.

**Mohammed.** The Lord permitted the Islam to arise in the seventh century as a scourge of Christianity. Its founder was Mohammed, born at Mecca in southern Arabia. In his younger years he was a merchant, and on his long journeys he learned to know the various religions of the Orient. Being himself of a meditative mind, he withdrew from active life and for some time lived in a cave. When he was forty years of age he suddenly appeared and declared that the angel Gabriel had come to him and ordered him to

found a new religion, of which the leading theme should be, "There is one God and Mohammed is his prophet." At the beginning, only his wife and a nephew believed in him. The people of Mecca abused him, and to save his life he fled to Medina. From this flight, called the Hegira, in the year 622, the Mohammedans reckon their time. By his eloquence he won many followers and filled them with such enthusiasm that they were ready to fight for him. In battle he defeated his enemies and in a few years conquered entire Arabia. In 632, just as he was getting ready to extend his conquests to all the surrounding countries, death made an end to his ambitious plans. It is said that one of his wives, a Jewess, offered him poisoned meat in order to find out whether or not he was mortal.

His doctrine is a peculiar mixture of heathen, Jewish and Christian ideas. He denied the Trinity. Moses and Christ were great prophets, but he was greater than they. He rejected all images, even the pictures in the Christian church. His followers were not allowed to eat pork and to drink wine, but they might have more wives than one. He himself had seventeen. Although his life in general was unworthy of an ambassador of God, he nevertheless convinced his followers that all his teachings were received in a direct revelation from God. He laid great stress upon prayer. Five times a day a Mohammedan is required to pray with his head turned towards Mecca. Fasting and the giving of alms are also regarded as very commendable. But the highest degree of bliss can be attained by killing enemies in battle and by dying for the faith. Death, he said, was fore-ordained for a cer-



tain time, whether one is in battle or at home with friends. The sayings of Mohammed have been gathered into a book called the Koran, which his followers regard as holy as we do the Bible. The Islam, for so did Mohammed call his faith, does not demand a regeneration of the heart; nor does it recognize sin and grace; for the troubles and sorrows of life it has no solace. The entire religion finds expression in outward ceremonies.

The progress of Islam was very rapid. The successors of Mohammed, called caliphs, in a few years conquered Persia, Palestine, Asia Minor, Egypt, North Africa and Spain. Everywhere they took the crosses off the churches and replaced them with the crescent. Many Christians, under severe oppression, remained faithful to their belief, yet the majority denied it and accepted Mohammedanism. The churches of Asia Minor and North Africa, once in a flourishing condition, had lost their savor and they were cast out. In the beginning of the eighth century the caliphs with their armies passed over into Spain and invaded southern France, but there they were halted and in 732 suffered a total defeat.

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## 12. THE GOSPEL IN GERMANY.

Early beginnings. Already during the time of the Roman conquests flourishing Christian churches had come into existence in western and southern Germany through Christian soldiers in the Roman army. The majority of these, however, disappeared during the disturbances brought about by the migration of nations. This movement began by the invasion of the

Huns, a fierce tribe, who came from the interior of Asia and overran the East of Europe in 375. The German tribes were thrown into confusion and much of Christian civilization was lost. Before the migration of nations, the Goths lived in southern Russia, and among them Ulfilas labored as missionary and bishop with a great deal of success. He translated the Scriptures into the Gothic language and therefore may be called the father of Teutonic literature.

The first Missionaries in Germany proper came from England. Christianity had found entrance into the latter country even in the first century, but was destroyed by the invasion of German tribes, the Angles and the Saxons. In 590 Pope Gregory the Great sent missionaries to England. Through their efforts Christianity soon spread over the whole land and was carried thence into other countries. In the year 600, Columban, an Irish monk, with twelve companions, came to southern Germany. His foremost disciple, Gallus, founded the renowned cloister of St. Gall in Switzerland. In Thuringia and Bavaria Emmeran and Kilian did successful missionary work, the latter of whom suffered a martyr's death.

The Frisians were christianized by Willibrord, who came from England with eleven assistants. At first they were persecuted by King Radbod, who killed one of them and compelled the rest to flee. But they soon returned and preached with greater earnestness and better success than before. Utrecht became the center of their activity. There they would come together in winter and seek strength in the study of the Scriptures and in prayer. During the summer they journeyed through the land, preached the Gospel and

converted many to Christ. Even the king presented himself for baptism. But when he was in the water with one foot, he stopped and asked whether his ancestors were in heaven or in hell. The reply was given that they could not be in heaven, since they had not believed in Christ. He then refused to be baptized because in the other world he wanted to be together with his forefathers.

The two Ewalds, the black and the white, preached the Gospel in what is now Westphalia among the Saxons. The Saxons, however, were strongly attached to their heathen gods and murdered the missionaries. In the mountainous country south of Cologne Switbertus labored with great success until his death in 717. All these missionaries founded monasteries as a protection and support of Christianity.

Boniface, also known as Winifred, came from England to preach the Gospel to the German tribes. As he was the most noted missionary among them, he is called the apostle of the Germans. In the beginning he was in Frisia together with Willibrord, but soon went to Rome to be ordained by the pope. By this act he brought the German Church into a harmful connection with Rome; for soon after all other missionaries, likewise the monasteries, had to submit to the pope. Boniface was very zealous in his work in Hesse as is shown by the following incident. Near Geismar stood an ancient oak, which was sacred to Thor, the god of thunder. It was the popular belief that if any one touched the sacred oak, he would die. Boniface said that he would cut it down without suffering any harm. In the presence of a large number

of pagans he then proceeded to cut down the oak, and as nothing happened to him the ban was broken. Later the pope made him archbishop of Mainz, but he went back to Frisia where he had begun his missionary work. Here, after a short time, he was slain by the heathen in the year 753. His companions wanted to defend him, but he did not permit it and died with the book of the Gospels in his hand.

Charlemagne, a Frankish king, who was crowned as Roman emperor, had the ambition of uniting all German tribes under his rule and to spread Christian culture among them. It is to be regretted, however, that he thought it necessary to employ force to accomplish his purpose. Thus, after a war of thirty-three years' duration, he forced the Saxons to accept Christianity. In other respects he proved to be a wise and mild ruler. He founded many schools and monasteries, invited learned men from other countries, and ordered books to be written and collections of sermons to be made. In a controversy with the pope he decided that pictures should not be worshipped. He died in 814.

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### 13. PAPACY.

**Origin.** Among the Roman bishops, who were known as popes, there were pious and capable men who used their influence for the welfare of the Church. Leo the Great (440-461), for instance, induced Attila, the king of the Huns, not to invade Italy. Gregory the Great put the organization of the Church at home upon a firm basis and sent missionaries to England. If the popes had remained spiritual leaders only, their

rule would not have been so harmful. The real papacy, as it was known later, had its origin in the fact that in the eighth century the popes received grants of land and established a worldly kingdom. In a short time they got control over the greater part of Italy. They kept a large number of servants about them and had a well-trained army at their command. In Rome unscrupulous parties were formed through whose influence dissolute persons occupied the papal throne. Several times the German emperor came to Italy, dethroned the evil pope and put a better one in his place.

Gregory VII (1073-1085), through his ability and his morally clean life, brought papacy into honor again and attained for it a high degree of power. He asserted that the apostle Peter, according to Matth. 16:18, was appointed by the Lord to be the head of the Church. Upon that authority he founded the Church at Rome and was its bishop for twenty-five years. Therefore the popes are his successors and are to be regarded as the vicars of Christ on earth. Their authority is above that of all princes and kings. Just as the moon receives its light from the sun, so the kings and emperors are dependent upon the pope. He is their superior and to his decisions they must yield. To resist him is to resist God. All lands must pay him tribute—known by the name of Peter's Pence. The German emperor Henry IV dared to resist him, but was compelled to make a journey to Italy in the midst of winter and implore his mercy. Gregory did not permit the priests to marry and threatened to put under the ban anyone that received the investiture, that is, the right to preach, from some one else than him.



The political power of the popes reached its climax under Innocent III (1198-1216). He claimed authority not only over the Church but also over the State. The English king, John, received his kingdom as a fief from the pope, and the German emperor meekly held the stirrup when the pope mounted his horse. His legates were found in all countries, and everywhere money was collected for him. At his court, splendor and luxury prevailed to a high degree and there was no sign of Christian humility and gentleness.

Hatred against true Christianity revealed the real nature of papacy. Wherever any simple, quiet and biblical Christianity was found it was crushed with the greatest severity. The result was that the people began to believe more in the pope than in Christ. The pope, instead of Christ, was regarded as the one through whose mediation salvation could be obtained. No wonder that the truly pious people of that time looked upon papacy as the Beast from the abyss and upon the pope as the Antichrist.

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#### 14. THE CRUSADES.

**Causes of the Crusades.** The land in which Jesus walked about, in which he performed his deeds of love, and in which he died on the cross for the sins of the world, has always been a land of the greatest importance to Christians. Many devout people made pilgrimages to the sacred places that they might pray there in quiet devotion. But as the Church began more and more to lay stress upon works, a pilgrimage to the Holy Land came to be regarded as an

act of special merit. A prayer at the Holy Sepulchre was thought to be more helpful than a quiet godly life at home. For that reason the number of pilgrims increased from year to year, and as long as Palestine was under the rule of the Saracen caliphs, they suffered little interference. But when, in the 11th century, the fierce Turks conquered the Holy Land, the pilgrims were cruelly treated by them. After their return home they would complain bitterly of the fact that the most sacred places on earth were in the hands of unbelievers and that these made an undisturbed prayer at the sepulchre of Christ impossible. One of these pilgrims, Peter of Amiens, also called Peter the Hermit, described the conditions prevailing there with such vividness that the pope was induced to call two church councils at which plans were considered how to wrest the Holy Land out of the hands of the Turks. By the eloquence of Peter the whole assembly was carried along and the people cried as with one voice, "God wills it," and then and there they determined to rescue Palestine by force of arms.

The first Crusade started in the year 1096. All those that took part fastened a red cross on their shoulder, and from this fact the movement received its name. The pope promised every crusader remission of sins and salvation. Peter the Hermit with a disorderly mob started first, but came only to Asia Minor, where the majority perished. Not until the summer of 1099 did the army of the crusaders proper get to Jerusalem. The city was captured after a bitter fight and with the slaughter of thousands on both sides. A Christian kingdom was organized and Godfrey of Bouillon was chosen king. He, however, re-

fused to wear a royal crown where Jesus had worn a crown of thorns. For the protection of the Holy City various orders of knighthood were founded, such as the Knights Templars and the Knights of St. John, or Hospitallers, who made it their duty to take care of the sick.

**Further Crusades** were necessary to maintain the new kingdom, since it was subject to frequent attacks by its enemies. In 1147 the second crusade took place and in 1189 the third. Altogether there were seven crusades, of which the majority accomplished very little, mostly because of the want of harmony among the leaders. The Turks, moreover, had won Jerusalem again in 1187, and in 1291 Acco, the last city held by the Christians, also fell into their hands. Thus ended the crusades, born of piety, fanaticism, and a spirit of adventure.

The effects of the Crusades were seen in a wider knowledge of the Orient, in the increase of the power of the pope, and in the superstition with which the bones of saints and other relics were worshipped. The saddest result, however, was that the people began to believe it was a service acceptable to God to kill infidels and that it was right to spread Christianity with the sword. Furthermore, the pope found it possible to organize crusades against such as did not agree with his opinion or opposed him in his views.

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## 15. THE DARK AGES.

The time between the 10th and the 15th centuries



is known as the Dark Ages. So many errors and abuses had crept into the Church and conditions were such that almost no resemblance to the Primitive Church could be found.

The Bible was known to very few. Rarely did anyone study the language in which the Bible was originally written. The majority of the priests could neither read nor write. They memorized a few passages out of the gospels and a few other books, and that was all they knew. No sermons were delivered during the church services, only legends about the saints were related. Everywhere the services were held in Latin and the people understood practically nothing of what was said. In most cases only mass was read, in which the congregation took no part.

The worship of the saints took the form of a pronounced heathenism. In all churches and chapels there were relics of them and these relics were supposed to perform miracles. Christians that had done more good works than were absolutely necessary for salvation were regarded as saints. Therefore the people prayed to them and celebrated festivals in their honor. The Virgin Mary, above all, was regarded as the Queen of Heaven and was believed to have been without sin. On that account people were taught to believe that through her salvation could be obtained and as special honor they always kept candles burning before her pictures.

The priests formed a class quite distinct from the laity. All sins had to be confessed to them and only those sins that had been confessed could be forgiven. They said that in the mass Christ was sacrificed anew by the priests. When communion was ob-

served, the laity received only the bread but not the cup because they might spill some of the wine. The priests taught that by their blessing the bread and the wine were changed into the body and the blood of Christ. The Church was altogether under the domination of the priests, and whether anyone would be saved depended upon them; yet they themselves often led very shameful lives.

**Through good works** anyone could earn salvation. He who would find rest for his soul was told by the priests to bring a certain number of candles for the Virgin Mary or to make a present to the Church. A pilgrimage to some chapel or to Rome was very helpful; likewise, to fast, to scourge one's self, to say many prayers, and to take part in a crusade. Those that had died might be released from purgatory by reading mass for them, not, however, without paying the priests liberally for their services. Piety had become a mere business proposition.

**Hatred of true Christianity** was one of the saddest signs of these dark days. Whoever departed from the teachings of the Church, or would not recognize the authority of the pope and the priests, was called an apostate or a heretic and was persecuted and even killed. Societies of monks were now formed for the purpose of suppressing heresy. Among these were the Dominicans who made it their business to search for so-called heretics and to torture them and, if they remained firm, to put them to death.

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## 16. THE WALDENSES.

**Forerunners** As we have already said, not

only did individual men here and there protest against the errors and the increasing worldliness of the Church, but sects came into existence which separated from the Church and attempted to retain the form of the Primitive Church. The more the Church in general lapsed into Romanish heathenism the more decidedly did these sects segregate themselves. They realized that the Church was following a wrong course from that time on, when, under Constantine, it had formed a union with the State and, with the acquisition of wealth, had assumed the role of a world power. We find these sects under various names, such as the Novatians in Rome and North Africa, the Priscillians in Spain, the Paulicians in Asia Minor, the Bogomiles in Bulgaria, the Claudists and Wallenses in Italy, Catharists, or Albigenses, and Waldenses in all southern Europe. Though they differed in some points of belief, in themselves important enough, yet in one thing they agreed; namely, that the Roman Church, as a priestly church, had deviated from the truth, and that the original form of the Church should be retained in the individual organizations. Membership in these should be voluntary and a holy life in imitation of that of Christ was essential. The various names given to the movement at different times were merely nicknames. They called themselves Brethren or Apostolic Christians.

Peter Waldo was the leader of one of these sects, called Waldenses after his name. Through him, since he insisted on the careful study of the Holy Scriptures, the congregations came to a fuller knowledge and perception of the truth. About the year 1170 he lived at Lyons in southern France, where he was a wealthy

merchant. He was shaken out of his life of ease and indifference by the sudden death of a friend and was converted to God. He then broke off all business relations, gave a part of his property to the poor and with the rest had the Bible translated into his native language. He realized that the Gospel ought to be brought to the poor people, and therefore he organized a society of preachers having this purpose in view. Through this he became the means of leading thousands to Christ. The pope soon excommunicated him, but that did not stop his work. His influence pervaded the South of France, the North of Italy, and even a part of Germany. Everywhere hungry souls gladly received his message of the Gospel. In the year 1215, after an eventful life, rich in blessings, he died in Bohemia.

The doctrine of the Waldenses was in sharp contrast with the Roman Church. The Holy Scriptures were the foundation of their religious life. They valued the New Testament very highly, especially such parts as the Sermon on the Mount. As they accepted the commandments of Christ without reserve, they generally regarded the oath and military service as wrong; only in extreme cases would they allow self-defense. The command, "Love your enemies," they tried to observe to the letter. They rejected the Romish abuses, such as pilgrimages, worship of the saints, etc. Their knowledge of the Bible was astonishing. They had it in their own language and the children learned to read it and memorized long passages. Whenever possible they had their own schools. Quite early they had their own catechism which was studied by the children and those that applied for admission to the church.

**Their church organization** was modelled after that of the Primitive Church. All those that came to the meetings but were not yet members of the church were called lovers of truth. They admitted no one to membership except by baptism on the confession of faith. The direct management of the church was in the hands of the ministers who were distinguished as deacons, evangelists, pastors and bishops. Some of these gave up their earthly possessions and as itinerant preachers journeyed from place to place. They practiced the precepts of Christ as given in Matth. 10 and were called apostles or sometimes also friends of God. The churches regarded it as very important that their teachers and preachers be pious, consecrated men, such whose lives harmonized with their position. In their meetings they sang and prayed and read the Word of God; they observed the Lord's Supper in a simple manner. They laid great stress upon private devotions. Since they did not believe it was right to erect large and beautiful cathedrals, they, as a rule, built simple chapels.

**The apostles** of this sect are especially noteworthy since they deserve that name in every respect. In simple garb they traveled about and sold small articles for household use. Wherever possible they took their testament and began to talk about the costly pearl they had in possession. They also had great influence among the churches through the letters they wrote to them. Many of them came from the best families and had attended the best schools. They could have occupied important positions in the world, but they sacrificed everything for Christ. Such a man was Bishop Reiser, who was burned in 1458 at Strassburg.



## 17. PERSECUTIONS OF THE WALDENSES.

**Their position** towards the Catholic Church was, as we have mentioned before, at first decidedly negative. They severely criticized the unholy life of the priests. On the other hand, however, they also recognized and valued highly whatever good they found. They greatly esteemed the maxims of the Church Fathers and the creed of the Primitive Church. They did not assert that no one in the Roman Catholic Church could be saved, yet they believed that it was very difficult. Unhindered approach to God, that is, without any priest or saint as mediator, was to them a most precious privilege. On that account they often omitted the sacraments, especially baptism, if on their account they were in danger of persecution. They mostly retained their membership in the Catholic Church and attended its services, nevertheless they formed a sort of society which had its separate meetings.

**Their pure life** was praised even by their enemies, who openly declared that "the Waldenses enjoy great advantages because they lead a purer life than other Christians. They never swear; they never use the name of God in vain, and they faithfully keep their promises." In order to escape all temptation to cheat, they avoided business transactions as much as possible and engaged in agriculture and ordinary trades. As they were industrious and frugal in their habits and dressed simply, they were mostly well-to-do. Their children were carefully brought up. Consequently, when they were grown, they had no difficulty in finding positions. The Waldenses had an excellent reputation as servants



and renters. Their life as a whole offers a proof that piety has its rewards here on earth, as well as in heaven.

Yet, in spite of their blameless life they were shamefully slandered. As in the case of the early Christians, they were said to practise in their meetings all sorts of sins and vices. Because they often held their meetings in caves, they were called cave-dwellers, associates of wolves, etc. Their pious life was said to be nothing but pretense and by it they could easily make themselves appear the best Christians.

A deadly hatred nearly always was the lot of the Waldenses, because, according to the teachings of the Roman Church, heresy, which always meant a departure from her teachings, was more dangerous than the greatest crime. It was very seldom, therefore, that the Waldenses were left in peace. A synod, in 1229, decided that any prince or judge who should give protection to a heretic should be deprived of his land and of his property. Innocent III., the most illustrious of the popes, preached a crusade against the heretics in southern France, which was carried on with great cruelty and lasted twenty years. When a town was attacked, the soldiers received orders to spare no one, since the Lord would recognize his own, that is, the Catholics. That the Waldenses might be found out everywhere, the pope ordered that each adult person should confess before a priest at least once in two years. A special board of inquiry, called the Inquisition, was organized and its work entrusted to the Dominicans. The Waldenses then suffered terrible tortures. Many of them were burned to death. In

Mainz 35 died thus, in Strassburg 50 and in Bingen 18. In Italy 400 mothers with their children had taken refuge in a cave. The enemies built a fire at the entrance and suffocated them. At another time a large number of them were driven across the Alps in winter. The poor mothers carried the smallest children in their arms and led the older ones by the hand, while the men tried to keep off the pursuers. Many of them were murdered and others died of hunger. Among the latter were 180 children. Thus the Waldenses, like the Christians of the early days, through their lives and their suffering and death gave evidence of the invincible power of the Gospel. The Roman Church, on the other hand, at that time was drunk with the blood of the saints and gave evidence that in her true nature she was an enemy of truth and piety.

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## 18. FORERUNNERS OF THE REFORMATION.

The Waldenses, through the purity of their religion, had done much to spread the conviction among the people that the Roman Church was full of errors with which sincere Christians should have nothing to do. Likewise, by means of their literature they helped to prepare the ground for the Reformation. The Waldenses, like the Catharists before them, translated the Bible into their mother tongue and spread it widely. The only piece of literature of the Catharists that is still in existence is a translation of the Bible into the French language. This translation was made in the 12th century. In a cloister at Tepl, Bohemia, a book of the Waldenses was found that contained a translation of the New Testament which was made in the

14th century. This translation is called the Codex Teplensis and was used as the basis of all German bibles which were issued after the invention of printing until the year 1522. This German bible, of which 14 editions were published, was largely used by Luther in his translation. The Waldensian apostles also exerted a far-reaching influence through their letters which they sent around among the churches. In fact, the Waldenses were like beacon lights which send their beams out into the darkness in all directions. They were found in the South of France, in upper Italy, in Switzerland, and along the Rhine in the large cities of Strassburg, Augsburg, and Nuremberg. They made their way into Bohemia and even into northern Germany.

**Schools of Heretics (Ketterschulen).** Because of the many bloody persecutions the number of Waldensian congregations was considerably diminished. In many places where formerly were large congregations only small circles remained. In order not to be entirely wiped out, many of them in Germany and Switzerland omitted the holy sacraments, especially baptism, and confined themselves to quiet meetings in which they read the Scriptures and comforted one another. In this manner they succeeded in keeping their church organization and in preserving the faith of their fathers. These meetings, which were called heretic schools by the enemies, in many places helped very much to prepare the way for the Reformation.

**John Huss.** During the 15th century, even within the Catholic Church, many voices were heard that demanded a reformation. Most of them thought that the reformation should begin at the top. Accord-

ingly, three great church councils were called, namely at Pisa, Constance and Basel. At these councils the purification of the Church was under discussion. Very little, however, was accomplished and the reason is not hard to find. Any reformation with visible results must be preceded by a change of the heart evidenced by repentance. In order that such a change may take place the Word of God must be given to the people. Some pious men recognized this necessity and tried their best to spread a knowledge of the Bible. Such men are called forerunners of the Reformation. Among these was John Wyclif in England (1324-1384). In his dealings with the papal legates he became aware of the avarice of the pope and of many errors in the Romish Church. He took a positive stand against these, and, in order to make his opposition more effective, he translated the Bible into the English language. His writings got to be known even in Bohemia. Through them John Huss, who was a professor at the university of Prague, came to see the truth and he began to preach boldly that forgiveness of sins can be obtained only through faith in Christ, the crucified. His fearless words aroused the anger of the Roman clergy to such an extent that he was advised to go into exile. Two years later he was called to appear before the Council of Constance, and in that city, in spite of the fact that the emperor Sigismund had assured him of his protection, he was burned on the 6th of July, 1415. The execution of John Huss aroused his followers to such a degree that they seized weapons and in battle defeated all forces sent against them by Pope and Emperor. At last the Council of Basel was compelled to give them certain

privileges ,among which was the right to preach in the language of the people.

**The Bohemian Brethren** were that branch of the Hussites who realized that it was not right to defend one's faith with the sword. With them united the rest of the Waldensian congregations. In the year 1467 they held a council at Lhota, to which came delegates of the Waldensian churches of other countries. In this council they decided that from then on they would not only teach that baptism should be administered on confession of faith but they would also practice what they taught, and consequently would definitely break off all connection with the Catholic Church. An old Austrian bishop of the Waldenses ordained three of their preachers to bishops. They showed great activity and in fifty years increased to 200,000 members. They had their own schools and printing shops ,and published the Waldensian catechism and numerous other works in the Bohemian language. By such means they helped very much to prepare the way for the Reformation.

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### III. The Period of the Reformation.

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#### 19. LUTHER AND ZWINGLI.

**Luther's early days** show that God often finds his servants there where worldly wisdom would hardly expect to find them. Martin Luther was born on the 10th of November, 1483, at Eisleben. He was the son of a poor miner and was brought up under



needy circumstances and with great severity. He attended school at Magdeburg and Eisenach and earned his bread by singing before the houses of rich people. When he was eighteen years old he entered the university at Erfurt. Here he found a Latin bible, which he read with great pleasure. By the tragic death of a friend he was induced to enter a monastery, where he thought he could devote himself entirely to the service of God. But he found no peace, although he subjected himself to all sorts of privations. For days he lay in his cell and lamented over his sins, until, finally, he came to the conviction that remission of sins comes only through grace. In 1508 he was called as professor to the university at Wittenberg. He next visited Rome and entered the city with great expectations. He there became thoroughly acquainted with popery and returned greatly disappointed. He devoted himself more earnestly to the study of the Holy Scriptures and by the grace of God succeeded in finding one precious truth after another.

In the year 1517 Luther first entered upon his career as reformer. It was the time when Pope Leo X., by selling indulgences, obtained large sums of money for rebuilding the church of St. Peter in Rome. John Tetzel, a notorious seller of indulgences, traveled through Saxony and made the people believe that sorrow over sins and repentance of them were unnecessary; all they had to do was to buy a letter of indulgence and their sins would be forgiven. Luther, indignant because the people were cheated out of their money and their salvation, at first preached against this evil. Then on the 31st of October, he posted on the door of the church of All Saints at Wittenberg



ninety-five theses, in which he condemned the sale of indulgences as an abomination. The pope tried to force him to recant, but as Luther remained firm he was excommunicated. In 1521 he was called to appear before the emperor Charles V. at the Diet of Worms and was requested to recant. He steadfastly refused, however, and said, "Here I stand; I can do naught else. God help me. Amen." He was then put under the ban of the empire, which meant that anyone might kill him. But the Elector of Saxony protected him and had him secretly brought to the castle of the Wartburg, where he was kept in disguise. While here in seclusion he translated the New Testament into the German language. Later he translated also the Old Testament, but not until 1534 was the entire Bible completed. In 1522 Luther returned to Wittenberg, where he resumed his work as preacher, teacher and author.

**The Reformation** asserted itself in such a way that whole cities and countries separated from Rome and introduced an evangelical manner of worship. The people accepted Luther's theses and likewise received with favor his other treatises in which he called the pope the Antichrist and declared that the Bible was the only guide of our lives and faith. Many thousands adhered to his teachings and were not at all terrified by the threats of the pope and the emperor. In a few years the Reformation was established in Saxony, Hesse, Prussia, and in many of the large cities. Cloisters were suppressed, pictures were removed from churches, and the German language was introduced in the religious services. Mass and celibacy of the clergy were abolished and the Lord's Supper was held in a simpler form. Luther himself mar-

ried and the majority of the evangelical preachers followed his example. Luther paid a great deal of attention to the establishment of schools and to the education of the children of the common people. He wrote a small and a large catechism and composed a number of songs and hymns, among which the hymn of the Reformation, "A mighty fortress is our God," is the best known. He and his co-laborer Philipp Melancthon brought a great blessing to the people; for they emphasized the fact that salvation can not be obtained through fasting and ceremonies but only through Christ. Luther died in the year 1546. It is a great pity that a man who was so gifted and who had come to the realization of so many precious truths should show himself so intolerant towards those who did not agree with him. He called them heretics and visionaries and expressed the opinion that it was altogether right to persecute them.

Ulrich Zwingli in Zurich, Switzerland, also had come to see the errors of the Church and to realize the evangelical truths contained in the Bible. He strove to introduce a reformation there just as Luther had done in Saxony. As a result a separation from the Church of Rome took place at Zurich and in other cities and cantons of Switzerland. Zwingli and Luther, however, did not work in harmony, since they could not agree in their teachings in regard to the Lord's Supper. In a conflict between the Protestant and Catholic cantons, brought about largely by the intolerance of the former, Zwingli fell in battle in the year 1531.

## 20. THE ANABAPTISTS IN SWITZERLAND.

**Origin.** In the larger cities of Switzerland, such as Zurich, Basel and St. Gall, small remnants of the old Waldensian congregations had remained together and had preserved intact the faith of their fathers. They did not formally separate from the Catholic Church, for if they had done so they would have been persecuted. On that account, too, they did not practice adult baptism; yet they had their own teachers and preachers and were faithful in the study of the Word of God. At the same time, they kept up communications with the brethren of the faith in Italy, France and Germany. In Zurich their meetings were sometimes attended by Zwingli. When he began with his reformation, they supported him, but soon expressed the opinion that his reform was not of the right sort and was not thorough enough. He, for instance, permitted the City Council to decide church matters instead of letting the Church herself do this. Likewise he was unwilling to exercise church discipline. After long debates, those that were not in favor of establishing a State Church but rather one of the Apostolic order, separated from him, and in January, 1525, formed a separate organization by adopting adult baptism.

**Prominent members** of the new congregation were the following: 1. Conrad Grebel, the son of a rich alderman. He had attended the universities and was well versed in the ancient languages. 2. Felix Manz, also of prominent family and well educated, particularly in Hebrew. In his mother's house the congregation held its meetings. 3. William Reublin, an eloquent pastor in Zurich, who, already in earlier days, had at-

tacked Romish errors. 4. George Blaurock, a former monk, who always wore a blue coat, hence the name. 5. Andrew von der Stuelzen, so-called because he went on crutches. Nearly all of these were zealous members of the quiet Bible schools which the people generally derided as "heresy schools." These men united with many others and formed a congregation patterned after the Primitive Church as they found it described in the New Testament and as it had been transmitted to them by their ancestors. They required a holy life, humility in thought and in deed, and would not permit usury, deceit, military service and the oath. Whoever fell into a sinful life was excluded from the church.

**Growth of the Movement.** In other places of Switzerland, especially at St. Gall, Anabaptist congregations were organized. Their preachers found many adherents in the country districts. Thousands came together to listen to the Word, although the meetings mostly were held in fields and in forests under the open sky. Many of the hearers were convinced that the Anabaptists lived more strictly in accordance with the Word of God than did Zwingli and his associates, who permitted the State to rule the Church and countenanced military service and infant baptism. Furthermore, they maltreated all those who were not of their opinion. In those circles that adhered to Zwingli there were many that led sinful lives and yet were regarded as good Christians, while, on the other hand, the Anabaptists emphasized true piety. By their sincerity they gained many adherents. The congregation at St. Gall, for instance, consisted of about 800 members.

Persecutions of the most violent sort soon broke

out against them. Zwingli called them devils disguised as angels of light and induced the government to prohibit them from preaching and baptizing. They were not permitted to print anything or to build churches. Their enemies called them Anabaptists and revolutionists and invented all sorts of stories about them. Men and women were imprisoned and threatened with death if they refused to change their mind. On January 5, Felix Manz was drowned in the lake of Zurich. Just as the waves closed over him he prayed, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Blaurock was scourged with rods and then driven out of the country. Eleven others were executed in various ways, and very many were exiled. These fled down the Rhine or into Moravia. Practically all the teachers and ministers were either killed or driven away. For a short time Michael Sattler was at the head of the congregation, but in 1527 he was burned at the stake. In a few years all the congregations were broken up and scattered. Those remaining either joined the State Church or lived in quiet seclusion, for after the defeat at Cappel the persecution on part of the Reformed Church had practically come to an end.

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## 21. HANS DENK.

In South Germany, soon after Luther's appearance, there came a time of great religious unrest. Everywhere there was a demand for reformation. This demand, however, in many cases, was only of a superficial kind and was easily satisfied with external changes. This tendency gave rise to bloody insurrections, especially on the occasion when the peasants



arose against the landowners and committed many atrocities. Many people thought that all they had to do was to become followers of Luther and all evils would immediately be remedied. For that reason they left the Catholic Church and organized evangelical congregations. Luther, however, formed a new State church. If there was any difference between former and later conditions it showed itself mostly in the fact that many reviled the pope and the reading of mass, but otherwise were guilty of many evil practices. One preacher, for instance, said from the pulpit that if any quarrel should arise, he had a knife in his pocket. With that sort of reformation serious people were not satisfied, for the fruits it brought were not the proper kind. Most of all, the remainder of the Waldensian churches in cities such as Strassburg, Worms, Nuremberg and Augsburg demanded a radical change in the church organizations. When in 1525 the first Anabaptist congregation was organized in Zurich, these churches also regarded the time as favorable for introducing adult baptism and having a separate organization. Consequently, during the year 1526 and 1527 in these cities large congregations were formed the members of which received baptism on confession of faith and united in a consecrated life in fellowship with Christ.

**Hans Denk** was the most noted leader of these congregations. It is said that he was born in Bavaria. He attended good schools, such as the university at Basel where he received the degree of Master of Arts. He was especially well versed in Greek and in Hebrew. When still a young man he was called to Nuremberg as rector of the Latin school. But when he expressed



certain opinions which displeased the Lutheran pastor and the City Council, he was banished in 1525. From that time on a nomadic life was his sorrowful lot. If he had submitted to the ruling parties, it would have been easy for him to win wealth and positions of honor. But he could not be induced at any price to act contrary to his conviction. In his wanderings he came to St. Gall and was strongly attracted by the Anabaptist congregation. In the following year he was baptized in Augsburg and became the leader of the congregation there. In a short time the church increased to 1100 members. But he was not permitted to stay here very long, for the persecution on part of the government compelled him to seek safety in flight. He then visited other Anabaptist churches and remained for some time at Strassburg and Worms. Wherever he was he proved to be a great blessing to the churches.

**A great Church Council** was held at Augsburg in 1527, on which occasion he was the chairman. The rules and regulations of the South German Anabaptist congregations were decided upon by the Council. In the main, however, they were a renewal of the old Waldensian arrangement. The principal points agreed upon were adult baptism, a church organization based upon New Testament rules, and a life consecrated to the service of Jesus Christ. At the head of the churches should be bishops and evangelists. Such who travelled about, comforting the congregations and soliciting new members, were called apostles. Main points only were emphasized; there should be liberty in secondary matters. At first there was a difference of opinion whether or not it was permissible to take

part in war. Finally, however, the opinion prevailed in the Synod that Christ with the command, "Love your enemies," had prohibited all violence on part of his followers.

**Denk showed great ability as an author.** At Worms, together with another man, named Hetzer, he translated the Prophets into the German language. This work was so good that Luther made liberal use of it in his translation. The language which he employs is pure and altogether free from the coarse expressions so characteristic of those days and so often found even in the writings of the reformers. Denk was a man of gentle disposition. He regarded it as very wrong to persecute anyone because of religious views. He was a follower of Christ in deed as well as in word. His favorite theme was that no one can really know Christ except he that follows Him in a consecrated life.

**Towards the end of the year 1527 Hans Denk died at Basel.** Sick and feeble he had come to this place but learned that it was forbidden to entertain men of his kind. As he could go no farther, one of his old teachers took pity on him and provided him with a place where he could die. Even his enemies praised his amiable nature and other excellent qualities. They gave him credit for having been a man of great importance to his church. After his death it was said that the Apollo of the Anabaptists had died.

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## 22. BALTHASAR HUBMEIER.

**Among the other leaders of the South German Anabaptist congregations we note Jacob Gross, Leonhard Schiemer, Eitel Hans Langenmantel, Ambrose**

Spittelmaehr, Hans Hut, Ludwig Hetzer, George Blaurock, and, particularly, Dr. Baltahasar Hubmeier. All of these men showed great zeal for the cause of truth and sacrificed their whole time and strength in spreading it. All of them, and many others besides, who had taken part in the synod at Augsburg, died as martyrs. Many of them came from the old Waldensians, and from the traditions of their fathers had learned to know the principles of true Christianity. Others had grown up in the Catholic Church, but in a remarkable manner had come through doubts and spiritual struggles to a true discipleship of Christ. Among these was Hubmeier.

**A Catholic Priest.** He was born in 1480 of poor parents, who, however, found it possible to send their son to the best schools. For some time he was a school teacher in Schaffhausen. Then he attended the university and obtained the Master's degree. In 1516 he became the preacher at the cathedral at Regensburg, where his eloquence pointed out a splendid future for him. In the year 1521 he accepted a call to Waldshut on the upper Rhine. As priest he was very conscientious in the performance of his duties as he saw them. For instance, whenever a thunderstorm arose he took the consecrated wafers and stood at the church door to avert all threatening danger. Likewise he observed all festivals and processions with the greatest solemnity.

**His conversion** to the Anabaptist faith was the result of diligent search in the Scriptures, which wrought in him deep convictions. When he was a priest he employed his leisure hours in studying the Holy Scriptures, particularly the letters of Paul. As

a result, his eyes were opened in regard to the evils common in the Roman Church. He read the writings of Luther and entered into correspondence with Zwingli, whose reform movement he then joined. In 1524 he introduced the simple order of the Reformed Church service. But when he later visited Basel and Zurich he got in touch with the Anabaptists. He compared their teachings with the Bible and found that they agreed with it, in fact, were more in accord with it than were Zwingli's. He followed his convictions, and at Easter, 1525, he was baptized by Reublin. He himself then baptized about 300 persons and organized a large Anabaptist congregation at Waldshut.

**His flight.** Because of this reformation at Waldshut, the Austrian government was greatly enraged. It quickly gathered an army and attacked the city. Hubmeier barely succeeded in escaping. He fled to Zurich, where he was thrown into prison. Zwingli would not have anything to do with him because he no longer agreed with him. Hubmeier was requested to renounce his faith and, first of all, to recognize infant baptism, but he refused and was kept in prison for a long time. He became seriously ill and, in a moment of weakness, partially yielded to the demands made upon him. Whereupon he was banished from the country. For a short time he staid in South Germany, mostly at Augsburg, and then went to Moravia, where many Anabaptists had found refuge.

**In Moravia** Hubmeier became the leader of a congregation and enjoyed a brief time of very successful labor. Two noblemen, the counts of Lichtenstein, near Nicolsburg, received the fugitive Anabaptists on their estate and joined their church. The congregation

rapidly increased to the number of 15,000. While engaged in his work here, Hubmeier published many writings in which he presented the principles of his sect, and especially defended adult baptism. His motto was, "Truth can not be crushed."

**His death.** The Austrian government did not relax in its hatred of Hubmeier but sent word to Moravia that he should be arrested and brought to Vienna. In obedience to this order he was handed over to the government and thrown into prison. He was cruelly tortured, but remained steadfast in his faith. As he persistently refused to recant, he was burned in Vienna on March 30, 1528. His last words were, "Jesus, Jesus." Three days later his wife, who had cheered him in his last days, was drowned in the Danube. Hubmeier might have had an easy and comfortable life in this world, but he believed with Paul: "What things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ."

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### 23. PERSECUTIONS OF THE ANABAPTISTS IN SOUTH GERMANY.

**Causes.** In South Germany, as well as in Switzerland, the Anabaptist churches were most bitterly and cruelly persecuted. The causes are to be sought on the one hand in the hatred of truth by the Catholic Church, and on the other, in the intolerance of the Protestants. The rapid growth of the Anabaptist congregations could not fail to attract attention; for in a few years they had spread over all South Germany. Converted journeymen proved to be active missionaries and acquainted many with the pearl of greatest



price. The people in general gladly received the apostles of the Anabaptists. These men in simple garb came with the call to repentance and the invitation of the Gospel. Their clean lives proved that their teachings were right; for they demanded only what they themselves practiced—a consecrated life. The reformation should consist in truly following Christ, and not in using violent language against mass and fasting. In many Protestant churches conditions were so bad that Luther exclaimed, "Would to God that we were pious heathen." Yet he refused to listen to any doctrine that did not agree with his ideas.

**Calumnies.** The Anabaptist congregations of South Germany were held in grave suspicion and were grossly slandered and mis-represented. It was reported that they practiced evil things at their meetings, that their children were born with the feet of goats and the hoofs of cattle, and that their piety was pure hypocrisy. It was especially trying for them to be regarded as revolutionists who endeavored to destroy all government, while in fact, they taught in their sermons and their creeds that a Christian can not take part in acts of violence. Because Thomas Munzer, a fanatical revolutionist had rejected infant baptism and because the Anabaptists did the same, they were all put into the same class, especially after some of Munzer's followers had joined the Anabaptists. What the Anabaptists wrote in defense of their faith was destroyed without having been read. As a result, they were regarded as the worst people of that time. Even Luther said that as one devil is not better than another, so the Anabaptists are all alike. The firmness



with which they held to their confession both Luther and Melanchthon regarded as satanic stubbornness.

An imperial decree was issued at Spires in 1529 which provided that all Anabaptists, both men and women, should be executed without trial. It was stated that this sect was an old one and that it had been condemned before. The Protestant governments gave their consent to this decree. Philipp of Hesse was an exception; he thought that it was not right to execute a person because of his religious views. Already in 1527 a number of Anabaptists had been imprisoned and executed, among them many ministers and teachers. Armed troops of horsemen scoured the country, searched after these defenseless Christians and killed them. The Duke of Bavaria said, "He that recants will be beheaded, but he that refuses will be burned." In 1530 close to 2,000 had already suffered death. Many of them were secretly put to death, just as if they were worse criminals than thieves and murderers. There was no longer any feeling of pity or of justice towards them. There is an account of a sixteen-year-old girl at Salzburg who could not be persuaded to recant. The judge then seized her and thrust her into a horse trough and held her under water until she was dead. Many were put into dungeons into which not a ray of daylight could come and there they miserably perished.

They were so strong in the courage of their conviction that neither by torture nor by death could they be made to waver. Their leaders, such as Hans Schlaffer, Leonhard Schiemer and George Blaurock, gladly went to their death. Many received offers of good positions and wealth if they would recant, but

nothing could induce them to yield. On their way to execution they would often sing as if going to a wedding, or they would urge bystanders to leave their sinful ways and turn to Christ. In order to prevent them from doing this and gaining adherents in their dying moments, their tongues were burned out with red-hot irons.

Many voices were heard in behalf of the Anabaptists in such places where their sincere piety was known and understood. Bucer of Strassburg, for instance, said there was no doubt that among them were dear children of God. Capito likewise expressed the opinion that among the Anabaptists there were true servants of God. Katherina Zell, the wife of a Strassburg pastor wrote to the Protestant clergy: "The poor Anabaptists are hunted like wild boars, although they confess Christ as we do. Find the blame among yourselves that they separate from us." Philip of Hesse, in a very decided manner, expressed himself to the effect that among those who are called fanatics there was more true Christianity to be seen than among others.

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## 24. JACOB HUTTER.

In the Tyrol, especially in the mountainous regions and the mines, the people suffered much from civil and religious oppression. They gave a hearty welcome to the evangelists sent by the Anabaptist churches in Switzerland and gladly received the Gospel as preached by them. Among the men that developed great activity was George Blaurock. The Romish Church, however, soon made an end of him by burning him

at the stake (1529). Many of his associates suffered a like fate. Of those who escaped some concealed themselves in the mines and others fled to Moravia. Under the leadership of able men a large number succeeded in passing through Austria and reaching this haven of refuge. Among these leaders the most prominent was Jacob Hutter, the successor of Blaurock.

**The congregation at Nicolsburg**, which had been gathered by Hubmeier, at the beginning received large additions from Switzerland and the Tyrol. A certain Wiedeman advanced the opinion that it was wrong for a Christian to give money for purposes of war. Likewise he held that in accordance with the example of the first congregation in Jerusalem, Christians should have no private possessions but should hold everything in common. There were many who favored his teachings. These separated from the rest and went to Austerlitz. Wiedeman spread his mantle on the earth and each one threw on it whatever money he had. Then they built large houses which they occupied in common and called them "Bruderhoefer." Soon a number of these communities came into existence.

**Jacob Hutter** came to Moravia from the Tyrol in order to become acquainted with the Anabaptists at that place. The congregation at Austerlitz, with their practice of holding their property in common, pleased him very much and he united with it. Other leaders with their followers, who had fled thither from Switzerland and South Germany, followed his example. Soon, however, they disagreed among themselves. The task then fell to Hutter, as the most gifted and determined man among them, to reconcile them and exclude those that had become lukewarm. He repeatedly went

to Tyrol with the purpose of guiding the persecuted Anabaptists to Moravia. He was familiar with all secret paths and hiding places, and succeeded again and again in eluding the watchfulness of the enemies.

A severe persecution arose in 1535 against the churches in Moravia. Ferdinand, the Austrian king, ordered them to be driven out of the country at once. The nobility at first attempted to shield them but finally were forced to permit the soldiers to carry out the king's orders. Hutter was together with his congregation when the persecution began. With a few belongings in a bundle he started out, followed by the members of his congregation, as a shepherd is followed by his flock. But they knew not whither they should go. They went from one forest to another, but could find no place to stay. Hutter wrote a letter to the persecutors and said, "We are persecuted because we have given up a godless life and have devoted ourselves entirely to the service of God. We have no spear nor weapons of any kind, yet they say we want to engage in war. We do not know where we shall go with our many widows and our young children. Surely we can not be driven from the earth." The congregation finally had to separate in order to escape their enemies.

**Hutter's Death.** Toward the end of 1535 Hutter succeeded in escaping to Tyrol, although soldiers were keeping watch on roads and bridges. It was reported that he was a tall man with a large beard and that he was carrying a woodchopper's axe in order to deceive people. His enemies said that he was in league with the devil, therefore he could not be caught. At last, however, he was taken by treachery,

and with a gag in his mouth he was brought to Innsbruck. Here he was cruelly tortured. Yet in spite of the pain he refused to recant or to name any of his fellow workers. On February 25, 1536, he suffered death by fire. When he was placed on the pyre he said, "Now come, ye adversaries, and let us prove our faith in fire." In the annals of his church in Moravia there were written these words: "This Jacob Hutter has ruled the church of God for three years, provided it with the Word of God, and has gathered a people that is named after him. We are now called 'Hutterite Brethren' and until this day we are not ashamed of this name."

Further persecutions were the "daily bread" of the church in Moravia. In the year 1539, when a conference was held at Stainerbrunn in Austria, a large number were captured and condemned to serve on the galleys. When they took leave of their wives and children even the soldiers could not keep from weeping. About the year 1545 the persecution ceased in Moravia. In the Tyrol the Anabaptists had nearly all been driven out or executed.

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## 25. MENNO SIMONS.

In the Netherlands, even before the time of the Reformation, evangelical Christianity was in favor. Here also some Waldensian congregations continued to exist. Pious men arose like Gerhard Groot and Thomas a Kempis, who wrote good books and started Christian schools. So when the seed of the Reformation was sown here it found a fertile and well-prepared soil. The writings of Luther were read with



great eagerness. At once the remaining Waldensian congregations began a new activity and succeeded in gaining much influence. Here also they were called Anabaptists and were immediately persecuted. In 1530 there were many congregations, but it is to be regretted that some of the leaders like Melchior Hofman entertained visionary ideas. A few went to such extremes that they were excluded from the church. Among the latter Jan Matthys was the most notorious. He became the leader of a revolutionary horde which found its end at Munster in Westphalia. They took the sword, an act which was altogether against the principles of the Anabaptists. There was another man, however, who united with the Anabaptists and whose work among them was of such importance that his followers were named after him. This man was Menno Simons.

**A Catholic Priest.** He was born in the year 1492 at Witmarsum in Frisia. He was educated to be a priest and after a time came to have a position in his birthplace. Here he led a rather frivolous and thoughtless life. When he performed the duties of his office he frequently had doubts regarding the teachings of the Romish Church about the Lord's Supper. Yet he did not search in the Scriptures because he was afraid he would be led astray. In the year 1531, however, he was brought to reflect on matters of religion by the execution of an Anabaptist. He now began to read the Bible, also the writings of Luther. He found that the teachings of the Anabaptists regarding adult baptism, etc., had good biblical authority. In 1536 he joined them through baptism and by this step sacrificed all advantages and expectations of honors of his position as priest.

A **nomadic life** full of trouble, suffering and persecution was now his lot. On request of his brethren he began to preach and assumed control of the congregation which had suffered a great deal for want of wise direction. But soon the government was after him and put a price of a hundred guilders on his head. God, however, protected him in a wonderful manner. At one time, for instance, an informer was unable to say a word when Menno was passing by in a boat. Afterwards he exclaimed, "The bird has escaped." Menno, indeed, had to flee from one place to another almost constantly, and he himself said that for years he and his wife had no room which they could call their home. Finally he had to leave his country; in 1543 he was at Emden and in 1546 at Cologne. From here he went to the Baltic sea and lived at Wismar. He extended his journeys to Prussia and Lithuania, baptized the youth and organized the churches. His last years he spent at Wuestenfeld, a village between Altona and Lubeck.

**His death** occurred on January 13, 1559. In the last years of his life he was a cripple, having broken his leg, and was so poor that his brethren in Friesland annually sent him 60 guilders. As his wife had died before him, two daughters took care of him in his last days. No one knows where he was buried, since that part of the country was entirely devastated during the Thirty Years' War.

**His writings** are very numerous. He printed them himself on his own printing press. Most of them are of a devotional character and show a thorough knowledge of the Bible. He related his separation from the Catholic Church and set forth all teachings in which

the Anabaptists differed from other Protestants and from Catholics. He also pointed out very clearly that they had nothing in common with the Muensterites and that it was pure calumny to say that the latter were their brethren. Menno was especially noted for the earnestness of his conviction and of his work. To be a Christian means to be thoroughly converted, to deny one's self, and to break with the world and with sin. In church discipline he was very severe. In fact, many of his brethren did not agree with him on this point. His co-workers were Obbe Philipps, Dirk Philipps, Gillis of Aix la Chapelle, Leendert Bouwens and others. The last named is said to have baptized about 10,000 persons. Dirk Philipps later was an elder at Danzig. He died in 1570.

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## 26. PERSECUTION OF THE MENNONITES IN THE NETHERLANDS.

A story of blood and tears is the name given to the early history of the Anabaptists, or Mennonites, as they were called since 1550. The Catholic government was determined to destroy them. No one was permitted to rent a house or farm to them, or to entreat for mercy for them if they were condemned to death by fire or sword. On the other hand, anyone that informed against them was to receive a third part of their possessions; for all Anabaptists that were taken were to be executed. The Duke of Alba, a Spanish general, was especially notorious for the bloody persecutions which he caused. Thousands of the poor people suffered a martyr's death.

The manner of torture and execution employed

was most cruel. The object was to compel the victims to recant and inform against their brethren and their teachers. To accomplish this they were tortured by means of screws applied to their thumbs; they were horribly whipped and thrown into filthy prisons where, in many cases, they perished miserably. Commonly they were burned alive. Some were killed by the explosion of gunpowder hung around their necks; others were strangled at the stake. It frequently happened that women and girls were drowned in rivers, lakes, and even in large casks. Some were placed in open coffins and buried alive. Others were put in little houses of straw and then burned. Since many sang and prayed in a loud voice on their way to execution and even spoke to the people that had gathered to see the spectacle, their tongues were fastened with screws. They were like sheep led to the slaughter.

So many examples of special faithfulness even unto death are found among these martyrs that one is astonished at the "cloud of witnesses." In the year 1552, a woman, Maria by name, was condemned to be drowned. As she was approaching the water, she sang joyfully that her day of deliverance had come and said, "I was the bride of a man, now I shall be the bride of Christ and shall inherit his kingdom." At Ghent, in the year 1576, a man whose name was Raphael, was taken prisoner. He was asked to give the names of others of his faith. When he refused, they stretched him on the rack and tortured him with chains and screws. Then they tied a rope to his toes and pulled; they poured water into his mouth until he was almost dead. He, however, called upon God who gave him strength that in spite of the terrible suffer-

ing he neither betrayed a brother nor himself wavered in his faith. Finally, together with others, he was burned to death. Very touching is the story of Dirks Wilms, a pious man of Aspern. Because the congregation often held its meetings in his home he was to be arrested. While engaged in flight he came to a frozen stream, which he crossed. When he was on the other side, he looked back and saw that his pursuer had broken through the ice and was in danger of drowning. Without hesitation he turned back and rescued his enemy. The latter was so moved by this kindly act that he was on the point of letting Wilms go. But the burgomaster, who stood on the other side cried out that the man should remember his oath and do his duty. Wilms was then taken and in 1569 was burned to death.

**Anna from the Hoff** was the last one to suffer the death of a martyr in the Netherlands. She was a servant in Brussels and during an imprisonment of two years suffered many trials because of her faith. As she remained firm in her belief she was put into a grave and at first only her feet were covered. The Jesuits then asked her whether she would not return to the Catholic faith. But she said, "No, I am glad that the time of my departure has come." She was then covered up to the neck and again asked to recant, but she remained firm and was then entirely covered. This happened in the year 1597.

**During these persecutions**, meetings could be held only under cover of the greatest secrecy. In towns and villages they were held in secluded rooms, and along the coast the people met behind the dikes and on islands during rain and snow. Many were driven



out of the country, others emigrated and found homes near the Baltic sea, especially in Prussia. In the Netherlands, somewhat later, these people called themselves “doopgesinnte” instead of Mennonites.

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## 27. THE REFORMATION IN OTHER LANDS.

**Sweden.** The re-discovered Gospel also became known in other lands. In Sweden it was spread by the brothers Olaf and Lorenz Peterson. Both had studied at Wittenberg and at home taught the truth they had learned abroad. One of them translated the Bible into their own language. Both king and people realized the shameful servitude to Rome under which they had been for so long a time. Consequently at a diet held at Westeras the Reformation was ushered in. In Denmark the change occurred in a similar manner. In both kingdoms the strict Lutheran doctrine was adopted.

**In England** the Reformation took foothold in a less quiet manner. At that time the profligate and capricious Henry VIII was king. In the beginning he wrote a book against Luther and was highly commended for it by the pope. Not long after, however, when the pope would not give him permission to divorce his wife, he broke off all relations with him and introduced a reformation of his own, but retained many of the Catholic practices. If anyone refused to yield to his changes, he was punished. Under the reign of his successor, Edward VI, a more thorough reformation was brought about. Bishop Cranmer sent for two pupils of Luther, who supported him in his efforts. After the accession of Mary, the Catholic daughter of

Henry VIII, a time of great trial came for the Protestants. The queen was determined to eradicate all evangelical teachings and ordered many persons to be executed. Among these was Cranmer, who suffered death by fire. Her successor, Queen Elizabeth, who was a Protestant, exerted her power in the opposite direction and provided for the organization of the English Episcopal Church and assumed the control of it. But there were many Christians to whom this form of worship did not seem simple enough. Therefore they separated from the State Church and went their own way. A number of these suffered death because they refused to acknowledge that the Church of England was the true church of Christ and Queen Elizabeth was its head. These separatists became known by various names, such as Independents, Puritans, Presbyterians, Baptists, etc. Later the Methodists and other denominations sprang into existence.

In Scotland a strict reform was instituted in 1542 by John Knox. The young and fascinating queen, Mary Stuart, attempted to hinder the reform movement and to introduce the old Catholic religion, but she was powerless against the earnest and determined stand of John Knox. The Scottish people were entirely devoted to him and his teachings.

In the Netherlands seven provinces declared themselves independent of Spanish authority and at the same time adopted the teachings of the Reformation. In 1579 they formed the Utrecht Union under William of Orange. Now all persecution of the Mennonites ceased. Maurice, the son of William of Orange, was especially friendly towards them and was supported by them with large sums of money. He valued their

diligence and energy very highly. He accepted their simple affirmation instead of an oath and forced no one to do military service and said that a state can only be benefitted by such quiet and peaceable citizens.

**In France** much blood was shed because of the Reformation. The Protestants, who were mostly followers of Calvin, were nicknamed Huguenots and were both secretly and openly persecuted. In spite of all persecution, princes and nobles accepted the Protestant faith and defended it with the sword. King Charles IX., however, was forced to give his consent to a terrible act of cruelty. He pretended to make peace with the Protestants and permitted his sister to marry the Protestant prince Henry of Navarre. Thousands of the Huguenots came to Paris to be present at the wedding festivities. Then occurred what is known in history as the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. On the night of August 24, 1572, at a signal previously agreed upon, the Catholics fell upon the Huguenots and killed many thousands of them, men, women and children, the massacre extending from Paris over the rest of France. Somewhat later, religious freedom was granted and some of the Waldensians united with the Huguenots.

**In Switzerland** Calvin became the head of the Reformed Church after the death of Zwingli. In 1536 he came to Geneva and labored there with great zeal until his death, which occurred in 1564. He exercised strict church discipline in accordance with Old Testament ways, making use even of civil authority to enforce the rules of the church. Already in 1532 the Waldensian congregations of Italy had joined the Reformed Church and, by taking this step, they, as well as the

French Waldensians, gave up their articles of faith regarding adult baptism. Only the Swiss and German Baptists and the Dutch Mennonites retained it.

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## IV. The New Era.

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### 28. THE WARS OF RELIGION.

**The Smalcaldic War.** The altogether unbiblical opinion, held by both Catholics and Protestants, that it was permitted to enforce one's religious views with the sword, resulted in several bloody wars. Both parties forgot that it is a Christian duty to treat with respect and forbearance such persons as differ from them in opinion. First of all, the fault lay mostly with the Catholics who were not inclined to grant religious liberty to the Protestants. When Emperor Charles V. threatened to make war upon the latter, the Protestant princes formed a league against him at Smalcald. But as they quarreled among themselves, the emperor succeeded in defeating their army and captured two of the princes. He was at the point of destroying the Reformation, when his favorite, Maurice of Saxony, revolted against him and compelled him to yield. A religious peace was then concluded in 1555 at Augsburg, according to which equal rights were granted to both Catholics and Protestants. The terms of this peace, however, were of such a nature as to produce strife among the parties for many years.

**The Jesuits.** The most relentless enemy of Protestantism arose in the order of the Jesuits, which was

founded in 1540 by Ignatius Loyala, a Spanish nobleman. The order was placed entirely into the service of the pope, and its avowed purpose was to resist the advance of Protestantism and to spread Catholic doctrines. Acting upon their belief that the end justifies the means the Jesuits regarded revolt, perjury, and even the murder of a prince as proper if the power of the pope could be furthered by it. The members of the order were mostly highly educated men and in the capacity of teachers and confessors became very influential both in the affairs of the Church and the State. They devoted themselves especially to the education of the young. Many of them went as missionaries to India, China and to the Indians of America, but their work did not have much of the true evangelical spirit. Their activity in Europe had dire results. In France they brought about the Massacre of St. Bartholomew and in Germany the Thirty Years' War.

The thirty years' war broke out in 1618 in Bohemia. The causes of the war, however, may be found on both sides; for Protestants as well as Catholics failed to observe strictly the provisions agreed upon in their treaties. The Bohemians renounced their allegiance to the emperor and chose Frederic V. of the Palatinate as their king. The latter was overwhelmingly defeated and was compelled to flee. The Catholic party now directed its attack upon all the Protestant countries and the cause of Protestantism seemed to be lost, when Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden came to their assistance in 1630. He defeated the generals Tilly and Wallenstein, but himself fell in the moment of victory at Lutzen on November 6, 1632.



His generals continued the war until 1648, when through the Peace of Westphalia, religious liberty was granted to Catholics and Protestants alike, excepting, however, the Anabaptists.

**The consequences** of this war were most terrible. Large portions of Germany had been laid waste. Where villages and cities had stood, there were only heaps of ruins, and where had been meadows and gardens there were marshes and uncultivated lands. Agriculture, commerce, and business in general were at a standstill. The population was reduced from sixteen millions to four millions. Thousands of these lived like savages in forests. Only after many years of continued effort could the elementary principles of Christianity take hold again among the common people.

**Composers of Hymns.** Yet during all these disturbances there was no lack of pious men among the Germans. In sorrow and tribulation many learned to know God and to serve him by administering to the sick and dying. In these decades we find a number of Christian poets whose hymns have become veritable gems to all Christianity. Among these we would mention Paul Gerhardt, George Neumark, Joachim Neander and Gerhard Tersteegen. These hymn writers sing of the fundamentals of Christianity, and no matter to which denomination we belong we love them.

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## 29. SPENER AND FRANCKE.

**Orthodoxy.** During the Thirty Years' War not only were there disturbances in the affairs of State, but there were dissensions within the Church. In

schools and churches they were zealous, not in combating sin and wickedness, but in quarreling about matters of belief. They would not admit that in such matters even pious men may differ. One faction presumed to be the judge of the other. They laid more stress on conformity of faith than on correctness of faith. It was by the grace of God, therefore, that a number of earnest, pious men arose in the Church who taught that, above all, one must have intimate fellowship with God, love for his Word, and sincere compassion with all that go astray. Such men were Johann Arndt and Gerhard Tersteegen. The former wrote a devotional book on true Christianity, which became a blessing to thousands of earnest Christians. Tersteegen was a weaver of ribbons and led a quiet life, but became a great blessing to people in ordinary discourse with them and in devotional meetings. It is said that he preached once in the Mennonite church at Crefeld.

**Jacob Philip Spener** did more than anyone else to bring new life into the Evangelical Church, especially into the Lutheran branch of it. He was born in Alsace and was brought up under religious influences. The death of a pious countess, with whom he was acquainted, made a deep impression upon him, and quite early in his life he yielded to the promptings of the spirit of God. Sunday especially was an important day to him. In the forenoon he went to church and in the afternoon wrote down his meditations on some biblical truth. In his twenty-eighth year he entered the ministry and labored very successfully in Strassburg, Frankfort, Dresden and Berlin. He realized that many things in the Church were unscriptural, and he be-

lieved that there was a lack of really pious pastors. He began to instruct young people in the truths of the Bible and introduced the rite of confirmation. He also kept the needs of older people in mind. He gathered them in meetings in which passages of the Bible were studied. These meetings proved to be a great blessing to the people. Attendance at the prevailing amusements he regarded as a very serious matter. He thought that theater-going and dancing were unworthy of a Christian, who should know other pleasures than these. On account of such views and his determined stand for pure Christianity he was severely attacked, but he was not hindered by this from continuing his course until his death, which occurred in 1705.

**August Hermann Francke** was Spener's pupil and shared his views and his suffering because of them. He studied theology in Leipsic and later began to give lectures in the German language on the Bible and favored discussion of the same. Because of this he was expelled from the city and went to Halle, where a university conducted according to Spener's views was flourishing. But here he found that the people were almost in a savage state, given to drinking, gambling and quarreling. He especially felt pity for the neglected orphan children. He decided, with God's help, to do something for them. First he began, on a small scale, a school for orphans; then adopted a number of them to be brought up in his family, and, finally, founded an asylum for them. He put his trust entirely upon God and was never disappointed in his confidence. He received help from all sides and a building was completed. Soon a school of higher learning was added, also a printing shop and a Bible Insti-

tute. Much spiritual life developed there and as a result, in 1706, the first missionaries were sent from here to India. Francke was called to his heavenly reward in 1727.

**Pietism** is the name which was given in mockery to this movement fostering a deeper spiritual view of life in the Evangelical Church. The opponents of the “pietists” thought that they were too pious and that they were extreme in their ideas concerning Christianity. Yet the pietists came together only at times that did not conflict with the regular services and only with the purpose to speak about the Bible and the spiritual experiences in their lives. In this manner they formed little churches within the Church and thus found opportunities to serve, each one according to his talents. The natural result was that a certain degree of seriousness became apparent in their everyday life, since true piety was to be sought, not in knowledge only, but in conversion and sanctification. For that reason many preachers and missionaries came out of the ranks of the pietists.

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### 30. ZINZENDORF AND THE UNITED BRETHREN.

**Denominations** is a term applied to such organizations of Christians in the Evangelical Church, the members of which agree not only in respect to essentials but also in matters of minor importance. There is only one Christ and only one way of salvation, and evangelical Christians do not quarrel about these points. On other matters, however, such as forms of service and church organization, earnest

Christians may differ, since our knowledge and our judgment in such matters is not the same. It may be, therefore, that one denomination comes nearer to the organization and efficiency of the Primitive Church than another. Yet, the various denominations should regard one another as sister churches; they should serve one another and learn from one another, even if they differ in outward forms. We note especially one of these denominations with which our own is in harmony, as far as essentials are concerned, namely the United Brethren, or Moravian Brethren.

**The Bohemian Brethren** were their forerunners. Let us call to mind that about the year 1500 these had a number of flourishing congregations. When Luther appeared, they were very glad of his efforts to reform the Church. Yet, at the beginning, they did not join him because he did not favor strict church discipline. Later, however, they became somewhat indifferent in regard to some important points of their creed. They gave up adult baptism, and in 1532, like the Waldensians in Italy and France, united with the Protestant church. Their congregations were in a thriving condition, but they allowed themselves to be drawn into political quarrels, and during the Thirty Years' War were almost exterminated. Their last bishop, Amos Comenius, a man noted for his educational work, died in 1671. A few remaining families lived in Moravia under severe restrictions. Some of them got acquainted with the noble Saxon count Zinzendorf who permitted them to settle on his estate. This settlement they called Herrnhut. From among these and other Reformed and Lutheran Christians arose the Church of the Brethren. Love to Christ was



the important thing among them; everything else was non-essential.

**Zinzendorf** was born in 1700 of a noble family. He was early led to the Savior by his pious grandmother and as a child wrote letters to him. He attended the school at Halle under Francke and was so filled with the prevailing spirit that he was induced to found a society the purpose of which was to further the cause of missions. At the university of Wittenberg he studied law and then was sent traveling by his guardian to rid him of his religious vagaries. In Dusseldorf he saw a painting of the crucified Christ, with the inscription: "This have I done for thee. What doest thou now for me?" This made so deep an impression upon him that he gave himself entirely to the service of Christ, and he declared, "I have only one passion, and that is He, only He." When he returned he renounced all honors and titles and united with the small congregation on his estate, even becoming their bishop. Under his leadership certain peculiarities developed. The congregation was divided into "choirs"; that is, men, women, widows and girls, etc., formed separate circles. They assembled daily and devoted much time to singing, in which they excelled. Zinzendorf himself composed many hymns. At burials they would sing songs of victory, and on Easter day they would hold services in cemeteries before sunrise. Zinzendorf died in 1760. The "Brethren" increased in number and spread over Germany, Russia, England and America, and many pious people found a sanctuary among them because there the old Gospel of the crucified Christ was exemplified in the lives of the members.

In their missionary zeal they showed such a power that all other denominations were put to shame. Zinzendorf himself went as missionary to the Indians in North America and was followed by Zeisberger and others. In 1732 Dober and Nitschmann went to the negroes in the West Indies. Not long after this, missionaries were sent to Africa and Greenland. The efforts of these missionaries were crowned with wonderful success. At the present time the number of members in the home churches is about 32,000, while the members of their mission churches exceed 90,000 in number.

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### 31. BIBLE AND MISSION SOCIETIES.

**Sunday Schools.** In the eighteenth century, not only at Halle and in the Church of the Brethren, but also in other places and in other circles of evangelical Christianity great interest in the cause of the Kingdom of God became evident. People began to realize that to be a follower of Jesus meant more than merely knowing about him. Fellowship with Jesus should lead to service of love in behalf of the poor, the sick, the neglected and the fallen. Out of this conviction was born the Sunday-school movement in England. In the city of Gloucester, in 1782, the attention of Robert Raikes, a respected and pious man, was drawn to the many children of the factory employees, who, particularly on Sunday, spent their time on the streets. He formed the plan of providing instruction for them a few hours every Sunday. In the beginning he paid a woman for doing this work. Soon, however, men and women were found who were willing to do it out of

compassion and without pay. There were others who gladly furnished all the money for incidental expenses. Soon the arrangement was found practicable for older children and gradually it developed into our present Sunday-school system, which has proved to be a wonderful blessing to the Church.

**Bible Societies.** Work in Sunday-school, however, was hindered very much by the lack of bibles. In many houses no bible could be found because the price was too great. A preacher, Charles by name, was led in a remarkable way to think over this matter. In his congregation there was a poor but pious girl. He found great pleasure, whenever he met her, to have her repeat the Scripture passage which was the text of his sermon on the past Sunday. One day she could not do this and, bursting into tears, she said that the weather had been so bad during the past week that she could not go to her aunt to learn the verses; for they had no bible in their own house and her aunt lived so far away. Charles was very much moved by this incident. He went to London and there took counsel with a friend how the Bible might be gotten into the hands of the people everywhere. The result was that in 1804 the great British Bible Society was founded, which, since then, has brought the Word of God to millions of people. In all Christian countries similar societies were formed. Already in 1712 a Bible Society had been organized at Halle by a former officer in the army. This society furnished bibles and testaments at low cost.

Already in the 17th century individual missionaries went to preach the Gospel to the heathen. John Eliot, for instance, went to the Indians of New Eng-

land. He learned their difficult language and gathered fourteen small congregations. These, however, were scattered again later by the wars. Eliot died in 1690, and today practically the only monument of his labor among them is his translation of the Bible into the Indian language. David Brainerd and others continued the work among the Indians. Hans Egede felt himself called to go to the poor Eskimos in Greenland. Later he was followed by other missionaries of the Moravian Brethren. In 1792, John Carey, a poor shoemaker, but an earnest disciple of Jesus and a member of a Baptist congregation in England, went to India and there founded a mission which was richly blessed in its results. Due to the interest aroused by the work of Carey the London Missionary Society was organized.

**Missionary societies** were organizations which made it their duty to send missionaries into heathen lands and provide for their support. The first ones originated in England, such as the one already named, which, in 1795, sent thirty missionaries to the South Sea Islands. In Berlin, Pastor Janicke started a mission school in 1800, in which young people were trained for service in the mission field. In Basel and Barmen similar institutions were founded. In 1810, in America several students met at Andover near a haystack to pray for missions. As a result of that meeting a mission society was formed and eventually Adoniram Judson and others were sent to Burmah. In 1820 some missionaries also went to the Hawaiian Islands. In fact, in our country, as well as in others, great activity in missionary work became evident. On this account the 19th century is called the "Century of Missions," and it deserves the name. Many mis-

sionaries became famous throughout the world, such as Livingstone, John Williams, John Paton, and Gutzlaff. In addition to the effort in the foreign field there was at the same time an awakening of Christian work at home. In 1836 the first deaconess home was founded in Kaiserswert by Pastor Fliedner. In many places institutions for the blind, the deaf, etc., sprang into being.

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## 32. THE MENNONITES IN HOLLAND.

**Quarrels.** Turning again to the narrower limits of our own denomination we notice, to our regret, that the spirit of peace and love was often wanting, especially during the trying times of the Thirty Years' War. In Holland and in Friesland there arose various branches among the Mennonites. In essentials they were united but they could not agree in matters of less importance. Should one have hooks and eyes or buttons on his clothes or ribbons or buckles on the shoes—such questions received too much importance. The matter of church discipline was taken very seriously. Many preachers, like Menno Simons, were very severe; others, however, thought that one could easily go too far and be too severe. On the one hand, it was profitable to discuss such matters, for it helped to increase knowledge; but on the other hand, it is to be regretted that separations took place because of things of minor importance. We see, however, that everything pertaining to Christianity was taken very seriously by them. For this reason the Mennonites were bitterly attacked by the clergy of the State Church. They were regarded as dangerous people, be-



cause they refused to do military service and would not take the oath. Many conferences were held with the Mennonites regarding these things, but as their belief was definitely grounded on the Scriptures, they after all had to be left in peace.

**True Christian life** in the congregations became evident in the sacrifices which they made because of their faith. They were not permitted to hold any public office and were compelled to have their meetings in secluded places. Not until the 17th century were they permitted to build churches, and then only in alleys and places hidden by other houses. They practiced great self-denial. They allowed no large weddings, no fine clothing, and no attendance at theaters. To be in debt they regarded as wrong and were very liberal in helping the needy. In the 17th century they sent large sums of money to the suffering brethren in Switzerland and the Palatinate. They had a treasury even for the needy in foreign lands. Because of their diligence a Dutch statesman called them the "honey bees of the State."

During the 17th and the 18th century the church in Holland suffered many losses in membership. Many of the members had become very rich. Their children associated with people of high standing and were attracted by their ways of living. In consequence, they married into non-Mennonite circles and became members of the State Church. In this manner the membership was reduced from 160,000 to 40,000.

**Faithful workers**, however, even in such trying times, were helpful in bringing new life and growth to the churches. Among these were some very noted men. Tileman von Bracht published in 1659 the

“Martyrs’ Mirror,” which in a short time found its way into almost every home. Besides the letters of the martyrs this book contains an account of their trial and execution. In 1666 Galenus de Haan founded a theological school in Amsterdam, and through it brought great blessings to the churches, since they were in need of earnest and able ministers of the Gospel. Cornelius Ris wrote a “Confession of Faith,” which was adopted in 1773 by many churches and even today is closely followed. In those days many of the ministers were doctors as well. There were also authors and artists in the churches.

**Johann Decknatel** was a noted pastor of the congregation at Amsterdam. He was born of poor parents and spent his youth in poverty. Later, when a preacher, he helped poor students wherever he could, and was the means of bringing new prosperity to the theological school. He wrote several books and also translated them into the German. When the Mennonites in Switzerland heard that he was wearing a silk coat, they sent several of the brethren to warn him against pride. But he received them so kindly that they could not say anything to him. With Zinzendorf he was on quite intimate terms. He died in 1759.

At the present time there are about 60,000 Mennonites in Holland in 130 congregations. The largest one is in Amsterdam. At this place there is a very valuable library. The theological school is still in existence. Since the time of Napoleon the Mennonites are no longer exempt from military service.

### 33. THE MENNONITES IN PRUSSIA.

The first Mennonite congregations in Prussia were served by Menno Simons. It is said that as early as 1526 there were several Mennonite families near the Vistula. Soon additional families came from Holland and made their homes near Danzig, Elbing, Marienburg and in the country farther east. This region was like a wilderness, covered with marshes and primeval forests. The annual floods of the Vistula and the Nogat made it almost impossible to travel through the country. The Mennonites, however, knew what to do. They dug canals, made dikes and dams, built watermills and in a short time changed the swamp into productive fields. The Prussian government saw the advantage of having such thrifty and industrious people within its borders and it sent an official invitation to the Mennonites in Holland to come to Prussia. In answer to this invitation, in 1560, there came a large group of families and leased the royal estate Tiegenhof between Elbing and Danzig. Others came from Moravia and settled near Marienburg. At the end of the 16th century a number of flourishing congregations were to be found in Prussia. As early as 1586 the congregation at Montau was permitted to erect a church building.

Very soon attacks of various kinds were made upon them. Some of the clergy of the State Church, for instance, said that the devil had sent the Mennonites into the country and that they should be driven out because they taught false doctrines. Some Mennonites had settled in Elbing and Danzig and followed the trades. Soon the citizens accused them of taking away their bread. Yet, in spite of such jealousies

there were always some persons that appreciated the Mennonites because of their quietness and diligence and protected them. But in 1676 matters seemed to take a turn for the worse. An official in Poland asserted that the Mennonites, because they were heretics, were the cause of the breaking of the dikes and the consequent floods. The nobility agreed with him and demanded their expulsion. In 1694 the king, however, decreed that the Mennonites should continue in the free exercise of their religious belief.

A quiet Christian life was the rule among the congregations. They lived secluded from the world and took no part in amusements. Instead of appearing before the courts, they brought their disputes before their preachers for settlement. Since they exercised strict church discipline, it was very seldom that a thief or a criminal of any other sort was found among them. Their children were brought up in strict piety and were taught that it is a Christian's duty to work and to avoid places where strong drink was sold. Consequently their farms were always in good condition. A court official once said that one could easily see where an ordinary drunken peasant lived and where one of the diligent Mennonites. In the year 1750, after having retained the Dutch language for nearly two hundred years, they began to use the German language in their services.

Gerrit Roosen. A Mennonite congregation was also formed in the large city of Hamburg. Many of the members were the owners of ships and were engaged in the whale fisheries. Once when they were in need of a new church they promised to devote a certain part of their catch to that purpose, and behold, their profit

had never been as great as it was that year. About the year 1700 a gifted preacher, Gerrit Roosen, was in charge of this congregation. He was a merchant, but devoted himself to the duties of the church with great faithfulness. He frequently visited the different congregations and besides doing his other work he wrote several books. He died in 1711 nearly a hundred years old.

During the Napoleonic war the Mennonites were brought into great distress. Already in the years preceding they had suffered various persecutions, and, beginning in 1786, many emigrated to Russia. In the march of the French army towards Russia their farms were plundered and they themselves were ordered to join the army. This, however, they refused to do. They willingly gave horses, money and other things as long as they had anything to give, but they would not violate their conscience or do anything contrary to their faith. On this account they had to endure much ridicule. The government was of the opinion that the Mennonites ought to fight against Napoleon, but they declared that even in self-defense they could not kill an enemy. On their payment of large sums of money the king pressed the matter no farther.

In more recent times, however, many forsook the principles of their fathers and were drawn into the ways of the world. A large number emigrated to Russia and others to America. At the present time they number about 13,000 in all the congregations. They also are brought more closely together by conferences and mission meetings. In 1853 a minister at Danzig, Manhardt by name, founded the first Mennonite periodical in Europe published in the German language.



### 34. THE MENNONITES IN RUSSIA.

**Chortitz.** In the year 1786 the Russian empress, Katherine II., invited the Mennonites in Prussia to come to Russia and settle there. Since she promised them freedom of conscience and certain civic privileges, they regarded this invitation as a sign from God, who in this manner showed them a special favor. Two men, Hoepfner and Bartsch, were sent as deputies to Russia to investigate. Their report was favorable and in 1789 several villages with about a hundred families were started on the little stream Chortitz, near the Dniepr. The beginning, however, was difficult. When their boxes came they found that they had been opened, emptied of their contents and filled again with worthless things. They suffered continually from thieving Russians. As they knew nothing of agricultural conditions in Russia, they lived for a long time in great poverty. When the first baptismal service was to be performed it was learned that the elder who was to officiate had nothing to put on his feet. Two brethren with more means then presented him with a pair of boots. Some of the people had come there with the expectation of getting rich in a short time, and when this did not happen, they accused the deputies of dishonesty. Consequently disagreeable quarrels arose. Only after several decades did the colony reach a state of affluence.

**Molotschna.** In the year 1800 Emperor Paul I. in an official document assured the Mennonites that they should forever enjoy freedom of conscience and be exempt from military service. This promise induced many others to come. In 1803 a large group of families came and established eighteen villages

near the Molotschna, not far from the Sea of Azov. They were surrounded in part by Tartars and in part by other immigrants from Germany. Many of the newcomers were wealthy. Consequently the colony on the Molotschna soon began to flourish and to become famous. The villages were all arranged on the same plan. Every house was surrounded by a garden, and in the midst of the village stood the schoolhouse and usually the church. Immediately around the village were the vegetable gardens and the forests, and after these came the meadows and the grain fields. Order, diligence and cleanliness were special characteristics of the people—a precious legacy inherited from their fathers.

A quiet Christian life prevailed in these villages, which in the course of a few years had increased to the number of fifty, due to fresh immigrations from Prussia. Altogether there were about nine congregations. In these the old organizations of the home churches were retained. Quarrels were avoided by all possible means and it was very seldom that a case was brought before the Russian courts. The villages helped one another in various ways, such as lending money at low interest. A society was organized the purpose of which was to improve the condition of the village schools and to found advanced schools. The communities were blessed by the service of many pious men who labored among them as teachers and as elders in the congregations. Among the latter Johann Harder at Ohrloff and Lenzman at Gnadenfeld deserve special mention.

Not all conditions, however, were ideal or remained so. Many of the people were very reluctant

to make any contributions for the support of school or church, regarding a well-ordered farm as more important than active Christian life. New movements, such as foreign missions, were not looked upon with favor by the churches, with the exception of a few small circles. On the other hand, quarrels became frequent and various worldly activities found favor in the villages. And so it came about that various circles separated themselves and organized new congregations, calling themselves "Brethren."

Severe trials regarding matters of faith also came upon them when in the beginning of the seventies the Russian government made efforts to draw them gradually into military service. When their deputies appeared in St. Petersburg they were told they had to do something, even if they would not fight with weapons in hand. Thousands of them then, in 1874, emigrated to America. A few went to Turkestan. The majority, however, remained and were satisfied to perform their duties to the State in doing work in the forests. The work of the young men who were called for service, consisted chiefly of planting and cultivating trees. During their term of service they stood under the religious care of their own ministers. In what position they will be after the disturbances arising from the World War have become settled we can not tell now; undoubtedly there will be a great change.

At present there are in Russia about 70,000 Menonites. Most of them live in the colonies Chortitz and Molotschna. Many of them have found their way into the Crimea, to the banks of the Volga, to Ufa near Orenburg, to the Kuban and to the western shore

of the Caspian Sea. In all congregations they now take part in foreign missions. They have their conferences in which matters of vital importance come up for discussion.

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### 35. MENNONITES IN SWITZERLAND.

**Persecutions of every sort** were the daily lot of the Mennonites in Switzerland until comparatively recent times. They were found chiefly in the Cantons of Basel, Zurich and Bern. Both the government and the inhabitants of these Cantons belonged to the Reformed Church. They, however, denied to others the freedom of conscience which they demanded for themselves. Consequently, one order after another was issued against the Mennonites, and always with increasing severity. After the battle of Cappel in 1531 they had achieved some freedom and in consequence increased rapidly in number. In the State Church matters were in pitiful condition. Old and young were given to swearing, cursing and other disgraceful practices, while the Mennonites insisted upon a quiet, serious and pious life. But since they refused to take part in war and to take the oath and would not give up their own congregations, they were declared to be dangerous to the State and were ordered either to join the Reformed Church or leave the country. Whoever would return should be scourged with rods, thrown into prison and executed. Many fled to Alsace and the Palatinate and there organized new congregations.

A large number were condemned to serve as galley slaves. The government sent them to the Italian or

French ships on which they were chained to the rowers' benches and compelled to handle the oars under the hot rays of the sun. Frequently they were placed together with the vilest criminals. Regarding themselves as free citizens of a free land they often attempted to escape persecution by flight, but love of wife and children outweighed every danger and they returned. Besides they could count on the assistance of other people, who regarded them as "holy people" and thought it was wrong to persecute them.

Hans Landis was the last of the Mennonite martyrs. He was a preacher and had been exiled, but he returned and was condemned to death. The executioner gave him a chance to escape but he said that he did not know where to go and was not afraid to die. Even if he would escape now, other officials would immediately take him, and so, in the year 1614, he calmly met his death.

The Mennonites in Holland aided their persecuted brethren in a manner that reflects great credit upon themselves. In the year 1641 they heard that many were in prison and were cruelly treated. They remembered them in their prayers in the churches and collected money for them. Through their influence the Dutch government sent a protest to the Swiss government against the cruel treatment of the Mennonites because of their faith. This protest helped so much that for a short time a chance was given to emigrate. A large number made use of the opportunity and, with the aid of the Dutch brethren, they found homes in the Palatinate.

Towards the close of the 17th century, however,



the Mennonites were again treated with great severity. They were forced to bring their children for baptism and to give up their church organization. Their preachers were to be caught and imprisoned, and any one that would inform against one of them was liberally rewarded. They then began to hold their meetings in ditches and thickets. Again the Dutch government was prevailed upon to remonstrate, and as a result permission was granted to them to emigrate. In consequence, about 350 of them left their country in 1711 and settled in Holland.

In 1693 a serious rupture was caused by Jacob Ammon of Alsace. He was of the opinion that the congregations had become too worldly and too lax in their discipline. He therefore demanded a strict observance of certain rules regarding dress and a separation from others. He who would not obey the regulations should be excluded from the church. On their clothing they should have hooks and eyes instead of buttons and on their shoes, strings instead of buckles. He himself later admitted that perhaps he had been too severe. His severity, however, was justified in part, for life among the peasants in the villages was heathenish rather than Christian. The new sect was generally called the "Amish Mennonites, or simply the "Amish".

At the present time there are in Switzerland only eight congregations with about 1500 persons. Hundreds of families emigrated in the course of the 18th and the 19th century, chiefly to North America, where they settled in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana. In Switzerland the largest congregations are found at Emmental near Langnau and on the Jura. They have introduced Sunday-schools, song festivals and confer-

ences. In case of war they offer to do voluntary work in hospitals.

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### 36. THE ANABAPTISTS and MENNONITES IN MORAVIA and SOUTH GERMANY.

In Moravia, during the second half of the 16th century, the congregations enjoyed peace. The Hutterites, for instance, found it possible to establish one colony after another. They continued to live there in a quiet, diligent and pious life in the manner of their fathers. They were highly esteemed as farmers, vintners and day-laborers. They made the best leather goods and cloth and the best knives and scythes. Nobody knew better than they how to build and equip mills. Moravia seemed to them to be the "Canaan" of the children of God. Every year they sent out messengers into the neighboring countries to solicit members and invite them to come to Moravia. In numerous cases these apostles were captured and executed. The Hutterites were very positive that their church organization was the only correct one. It is said that at the close of the 16th century there were 80,000 of them in all the colonies. This number, however, seems exaggerated to some who think there were not more than 20,000.

These congregations had to endure cruel persecutions during the Thirty Years' War, and after its close they suffered from the Turks. In 1622 all Anabaptists were driven out of Moravia. They were forced to leave their homes in the midst of winter and hardly knew how to keep themselves alive. The other inhabitants of the land, instead of showing sympathy, de-

clared that they were rightly punished and that they should be executed and burned. By the grace of God they were permitted to find a home in Hungary, where they established new communities. But here also, after a short time, rough soldiers fell upon them, carried away their property, burned their buildings and even killed some of the brethren. Later the Turks treated them with still greater cruelties and carried away many of their women and girls, some of whom never returned.

It is sad to note how in the 18th century these congregations fell to pieces. Various causes brought about such a condition. First of all it was very difficult for the Hutterites to bring up their children in the customs and the faith of the fathers, as they were altogether surrounded by Slavic people who were strict Catholics. Consequently, many left the communities, and the practice of holding their property in common fell into disuse in course of time. Besides, the Catholic government attacked them because of their peculiarities. It ordered that the children should be baptized by Jesuits and should become Catholics. When the congregations refused to do this their churches were closed, their preachers imprisoned and all who would not come to the Catholic service were scourged with rods. Many then escaped and found a new home in South Russia. In Hungary, the rest, only 137 persons in number, formally went over to the Catholic Church in 1782. In 1874 the Hutterites of other places all emigrated to America and settled in South Dakota, where there are several large and prosperous communities.

In South Germany the churches also had to endure severe persecutions during the 16th century. This was

declared entirely proper by men who otherwise were regarded as very pious. In Strassburg, however, authorities were more tolerant. Philipp of Hesse also declared he would not permit anyone to be executed on account of his faith. But in Catholic countries, in Bavaria, for instance, the usual method was pursued. Some were burned because they left the Catholic Church or because they wanted to celebrate the Lord's Supper as Christ had done and not as the Catholic Church prescribed. The last martyrs here were two Moravian apostles, Marcus Eder and Heinrich Poltzinger, who were beheaded in 1605. A woman suffered a similar fate in 1618 near Lake Constance because she wanted to join the Hutterites in Moravia. Eventually many went over to the Reformed Church, and during the Thirty Years' War the remaining congregations were practically wiped out.

New congregations, however, began to flourish here in the second half of the 17th century, due to the hundreds of Mennonites that were driven out of Switzerland and were allowed to settle in Alsace and the Palatinate. In the majority of cases they were very poor and suffered much from want. The brethren in Holland supplied them with money and food. Since they were diligent and thrifty and in a short time became comparatively well-to-do, they had to suffer much from their jealous neighbors. They were heavily taxed; they were not allowed to attend higher schools and could not talk to others about their faith. Many then emigrated to America, having received help from Holland. Those that stayed tried to remain faithful in their belief as well as they could, especially in the matter of non-resistance. But in more recent

times they yielded to pressure and were induced to perform military duties like the rest.

At the present time there are in South Germany, that is, in Hesse, Bavaria, Baden, and the Palatinate, about thirty congregations, some large and some small. To this number are to be added about twenty-five congregations in Alsace and France. What the condition of these congregations is at the present time after the close of the great war, we can not tell. Some of them were in the very path of the conflicting armies and without question had to suffer very much. Apparently all their able-bodied men had to join the army on the one side or the other. In the Palatinate, on the "Weierhof", the Mennonites are supporting a so-called "Realschule." Farther down the Rhine there are congregations at Neuwied and Crefeld, also in East Frisia at Emden, Norden and Leer. The one at Crefeld numbers about 1100 souls. Many members of these congregations are rich and belong to the better classes.

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### 37. THE MENNONITES IN AMERICA.

**Germantown.** The first settlement of Mennonites was made in 1662 at Horekil, Delaware, by immigrants from Amsterdam. This settlement, however, was destroyed by the English. The first permanent settlement was made at Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1683. Thirteen families came from Crefeld under the leadership of Daniel Pastorius and in part laid the foundation of the city of Philadelphia. They and the Quakers had much in common as regards manner of life and religion. They often held their services together. In



1688 their church organization seems to have been perfected and William Rittenhouse was chosen as their first minister. This man was very active both in the affairs of the church and the community. He, together with several others, in 1690 built the first paper mill in America. In 1919 a monument was erected in his honor at the Germantown meeting house. Daniel Pastorius, joined by three other Mennonites, in 1688 presented the first protest against slavery. Most of the earlier immigrants were weavers by trade and soon found work in their line. A few years later others came from Hamburg and the Palatinate. As these knew something about farming and the culture of the grape, the activities of the settlers became more varied and resulted in greater prosperity and the founding of other settlements.

One of the great needs of the settlers was books. They had not even a bible for their meeting house and in all homes there was a lack of bibles, testaments and hymnals. They turned to Amsterdam for help, but there was no immediate help in sight. The American brethren then took the proper course—they helped themselves. Christopher Sauer, from Westphalia, in 1743 printed the first German bible in America, forty years before the first English bible. The second German book published in America was the *Mirror of Martyrs*, which was translated from the Dutch. It appeared in 1748 and in a short time a copy was found in almost every family.

Christopher Dock was a very able teacher in the new settlement. After his arrival in America he followed a trade for a while, but soon found his work in the school room. For several months in the year he

gathered the children of the colony in the simple meeting house and taught them. In his methods he was far in advance of the ordinary school teacher of the times. He kept the children interested in their work and rarely found occasion to use the rod, which at that time was regarded a necessary means of education. He influenced the children much by his piety. He was noted for his gentleness, and people said that he never got angry. He wrote a book on pedagogy—the first of its kind in America. In this book many ideas were advanced which even to-day are regarded new in pedagogy. In 1771 death came to him in the school room. One evening he failed to come home. They looked for him in the school room and found him on his knees, dead. He reached the advanced age of 80 years. On the same place where stood Dock's little school house now stands the simple little church of the Mennonites in Germantown.

**In later days** the settlers had difficulties with the Indians and with the government. At the beginning the Mennonites, like the Quakers, lived at peace with the Indians. But when one war after another broke out with the Indians, the Mennonite settlements were not spared. A numerous group had settled in a lonely region of Virginia. The settlement was destroyed and the people were massacred. Also in Pennsylvania about fifty were killed and many lost all their property. They again applied to Holland for help and received it. In the War of the Revolution the new government insisted on placing the Mennonites into the army, but they steadfastly persisted in saying that with them

it was a matter of conscience not to fight. Finally they were left in peace.

**Other settlements** were made later farther west in Pennsylvania and in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa, and even in Canada. Large numbers came from Switzerland and the Palatinate. In the 19th century many removed from the Eastern States farther west and in consequence of this removal in some places only a few Mennonite families are left where formerly were large congregations. It is to be regretted that frequently in the search for earthly welfare the main thing became secondary and school and church did not receive the support due them. Yet everywhere, even today, the Mennonites are known for their simple life and for their thrift and honesty.

**Interest in the building up** of the Kingdom of God received a new impulse about the middle of the 19th century. In Pennsylvania John H. Oberholzer started a religious paper called the "Religioeser Botshcafter" and in Indiana John F. Funk started a Mennonite publishing house in which the books of Menno Simons and the Mirror of Martyrs were printed. Also by means of conferences a closer union among the congregations was brought about. In the year 1861 the General Conference of Mennonites was organized, the purpose of which was, first of all, to engage in foreign missions and to found a school of higher learning. Likewise the "Old Mennonites," the Amish and other branches of Mennonites have their own conferences.

**At the present time** there are in the United States about 120,000 Mennonites of all kinds and in Canada over 31,000. Since 1874 hundreds of families have come from Russia and Prussia and found homes in the

Western States, in Manitoba and other provinces of Canada. Among the immigrants from Russia many were poor and received liberal financial aid from the American brethren. All these have been trying to keep up the German language by means of parochial schools. During the recent war with Germany, however, the German language was excluded in many places. Several academies and colleges have been founded by the Mennonites of America. Practically all congregations still emphasize the principle of non-resistance, but during the recent war were put to a severe test.

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## V. Mennonite Foreign Missions.

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### 38. JAVA.

Only in comparatively recent times did the Mennonites recognize the duty and feel the desire of bringing the Gospel to the heathen nations. In almost all countries in which they lived they had been oppressed and persecuted and often hardly had known how to preserve themselves. When interest in missions was once aroused, in some circles, they first supported societies not of their own denomination. For instance, in Holland a mission society was organized in 1825, which sent its support in money to a Baptist society in England. In Prussia money was collected for missions carried on by the Moravians, and in Russia the support was given to the society at Barmen. Finally, however, the Mennonites began to reach out for themselves and started missions of their own.

In the year 1847 a Mennonite mission society was founded in Holland, which, in 1851, sent the first missionary, P. Jansz, to the island of Java. He came to the northeastern part of the island near Japara and there began to learn the language of the natives and to preach to them the Gospel of Jesus. Java is a beautiful island with a rich tropical vegetation. Rice does well there and forms the main article of food of the people. Other products are indigo, cotton, tobacco, spices and quinine. The island has more than 21,000,000 of inhabitants.

Mission work on Java proved to be a very difficult problem. The hot climate enervates not only Europeans but also the natives. The Javanese are naturally lazy, dull and suspicious of strangers, and, besides, they are thievish, immoral and very superstitious. In derision they often said to the missionary when he preached to them, "That does not suit us", or, "We do not want to go to the Dutch heaven." Young and old are users of opium to such an extent that one of the last services done to a dying man is to give him the opium pipe that he may stupefy himself. The European officials on the island were also unfriendly towards the efforts of the missionaries.

Yet in spite of such difficulties there were beautiful results. Even in the degraded Javanese there is after all a desire for salvation which can be satisfied only in Christ. On the 10th of April, 1854, Missionary Jansz had the great pleasure of baptizing the first fruits of his labor, a man and four women. This, then, was the beginning, although only a small one, of the first native church in Java. Missionary Jansz also started a school in the thickly settled district. A Dutch



teacher, Schuurmans, with his wife, came to Java and took charge of the school until compelled by sickness to return to Europe. The school brought much joy to the missionaries but also much sorrow, for many of the pupils persisted in their evil, heathenish practices. The growth of the number of converts was rather slow. In twenty-five years the congregation increased to seventy-five members. During his last twenty years Missionary Jansz devoted himself to literary work. He translated the entire Bible into the Javanese and published a Javanese grammar and other school books. All his literary efforts are highly valued and the Dutch government conferred upon him the highest order of the State. During the whole time of his service he never visited Europe, but remained on his field of labor. There he celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his service as a missionary. On the 7th of June, 1904, he was called to his heavenly home.

**Other laborers** on the Javanese mission field are the following: P. A. Jansz, the son of the old missionary, and three men from Russia, namely, Fast, Huebert and Klaassen. Jansz has been at work since 1878 and has suffered many trials. His wife and two sons died within a short time and he himself endured much from illness. He took charge of the station Mergaredja and founded a community where the natives were instructed in agriculture and the principles of a Christian life. Later two other similar colonies were organized. These colonies proved to be successful and have exerted a Christian influence upon the surrounding country. Missionary Fast came in 1888 and gave his time mostly to preaching among the heathens. For some time he was stationed at Mergaredja, where he

built a beautiful church. Later he directed the work on the station Kaja-apu. Huebert arrived in Java in 1893 and since then is at work on the station Kedungpendjalin. Then in 1899 Klaassen came to Mergaredja and devoted himself especially to the care of the sick. On all of the stations the missonaries were helped by native workers, both teachers and preachers. In 1903 the Mennonite congregations had increased to about 190 members.

Mergaredja is a Christian village founded by P. A. Jansz. Heathen families also are permitted to live there, provided they comply with the regulations governing the village. In this manner it is possible to shield children and young people against heathen influences. The village includes a hundred families or more. At the head of the village is a Javanese overseer, who, however, is responsible to the missionary. The land has been leased from the government. The school in recent years had about 200 pupils, with six native teachers. The children are especially fond of singing. Many Christian songs and hymns have been translated into the Javanese. At this place there is also a seminary where Christian teachers are prepared. In 1915 it had 39 students. P. A. Jansz was superintendent of this school until 1915, when his nephew C. P. Jansz arrived to relieve his uncle of the overwhelming work.

Taking care of the sick among Christians and heathens is a special part of mission work in Java. In Mergaredja there is a hospital which formerly was under the management of Missionary Klaassen but is now supervised by Sister H. Goosen. Another hospital was started at Kedung under the care of Huebert. Here as

many as 485 sick persons received treatment in one year. In 1915 a central hospital was built at Kelet which is conducted by Dr. Bervuts and in which eight native nurses and four helpers are employed. A leper asylum was also built in the same year in Dono Rodjo and R. W. de Clerq of Haarlem was made superintendent. These hospitals accomplish a great deal of good, although there is also some cause for discouragement. Many of the heathen, when in great affliction, promise to become Christians if they are helped, but very often forget their promise when they get well. Yet, after all, the missionaries are not discouraged, but keep on doing good and preaching the Gospel. In 1915 there were eight congregations in Java with 379 adult members, 64 having been baptized in 1914. There are eight native helpers and twenty-three native teachers, with more than 650 pupils in school.

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### 39. SUMATRA.

The Dutch Missionary Society has its official home in Amsterdam and the members of the board also reside there. Yet, from the beginning, they tried to interest the Mennonites of other countries in Europe in their work and met with a good deal of success. One congregation after another in Germany began to contribute liberally and began to regard the work of the society as their own. The assistance given by the congregations of South Russia has also been of the greatest importance. In the year 1903 the treasury had an income of 30,000 guilders. Of this sum 8,000 guilders came from Holland and 12,000 from Russia.

Because of this assistance the Dutch committee found it possible to establish a new mission on Sumatra.

**Sumatra** is one of the most beautiful and fertile islands of the world. Here we find lofty mountains and broad valleys. Here there are large plantations which produce excellent rice and coffee. In the western and northern parts of the island the intelligent Bataks live in large villages. Each of these villages has a separate government under a Radja or chief. The Bataks have many stories about the creation and about their own history. Their religion consists chiefly of a superstitious fear of evil spirits, the Begus. Originally they were fierce cannibals. The first missionaries, Munson and Lyman, who came from America in 1834, they killed and ate. In more recent years, Mohammedanism has gotten a large following among them. This religion permits polygamy and in other respects favors their evil ways of living. For that reason the Gospel finds a hard and stony ground among the Bataks.

**Pakanten** is the name of the first missionary station on Sumatra. It is situated near the middle of the island, right on the equator. Missionary Heinrich Dirks from South Russia founded this station in 1871. The Radjas received him very kindly, but said right at the start that they would not become Christians. But the Word of God soon showed its power over the hearts of this people. Already in August three Bataks were baptized and at Christmas five more. Dirks established a school, which was well attended. The congregation also began to prosper and in a short time sent out teachers and evangelists. Missionary Dirks after ten years of labor returned to Russia and became the pastor of a large congregation at Gnadenfeld, serving at

the same time as field worker of the Mennonite mission society. He was able to arouse such an interest in missions that a number of young men prepared for the work and that the main support of the Mennonite mission of Holland continued to come from Russia.

**The work on the island** continued slowly but steadily. For several years the station was in charge of a missionary named Irle. In 1888 Missionary Nikkel came from Russia and devoted himself to the work with great zeal. He lived among the Bataks like one of them, slept on the ground as they did and ate out of the same dish with them. In the year 1893 he baptized thirty candidates. But it was not all joy; he had also some bitter experiences. Some of his church members were guilty of gross sins and had to be put out of the congregation. Among these were some of his helpers. Because of quarrels in the congregation, he at one time refused to observe Christmas and postponed the giving of presents until the following year.

**Maura Sipongi** is the name of the second station on Sumatra. It was established in 1890 by N. Wiebe, about three hours journey west of Pakanten among the Ulus, a degraded and dull-minded tribe. Among them the men are the slaves of the women. At first they were very suspicious. They believed that for everyone that was baptized the missionaries would receive a sum of money. Only after six years of hard labor could the first ones be baptized. Soon others followed; even a chief came for baptism. Wiebe also founded a Christian village which in a short time was in a flourishing condition. In 1901 Missionary Thiesen came from South Russia and took charge of both



stations while Nikkel and Wiebe were on furlough in Europe. He devoted himself earnestly to his work. His wife held meetings with the women and gave them instruction in the Bible and taught them sewing. David Dirks, the son of the first missionary, Heinrich Dirks, is now at work on the island. At present we have no means of telling how many converts there are, but most likely there is a considerable number. In 1914, twenty-eight were baptized and 222 pupils were in school. There are five native helpers and nine teachers.

About two thirds of the expenses of the Holland Mennonite mission had been supplied by the brethren in Russia. The World War, however, cut off all communication with Russia and, consequently, all support. All reports indicate that the Mennonites of Russia are financially ruined and for years may not be able to recuperate, while the Mennonites in Germany, who had also aided in the support, will be under hard financial and industrial pressure and will not be able to do much for missions. Since the outbreak of the war the work has been sustained by the few brethren in Holland, but they can not do so in the future. Consequently the outlook of this prosperous and successful mission is rather gloomy at present. It may yet become the duty and the privilege of the American Mennonites to take part in mission work in Java and Sumatra.

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#### 40. AMONG THE ARAPAHOS AND CHEYENNES. (General Conference.)

**In America** an active interest in foreign missions

was awakened in the middle of the 19th century. In various States and in Canada thoughtful men came to realize that it is the duty of Christian people to bring the Gospel also to the heathen. Meetings were held and money was collected to further this cause. Samuel S. Haury, one of the students at Wadsworth, Ohio, where the first Mennonite school of higher learning had been started, declared himself willing to serve the Lord as missionary among the heathen. He went to Barmen, Germany, where he completed his studies. In 1875 he returned to America and began to look around for a place where a mission station might be established. He went to Alaska to investigate the field there. As a result of his trip he came to the conclusion that after all it was best to begin among the Indians in what was then the Indian Territory.

Among the Arapahoes at Darlington, a government agency, in 1880, Missionary S. S. Haury established the first mission station of the Mennonites in America. This tribe, which numbered about 1700 souls, a short time before had been brought here from Wyoming by the Government. They were partly supported by the Government and were supposed to learn agriculture and cattle raising. For that reason it was thought best by the Mission Board to place the Indian children in a school where, besides religion and the ordinary branches of study they might learn to work in field and garden. In 1882 the building in which the school was held was destroyed by fire and a child of the missionary and three Indian children were suffocated. A larger building was immediately erected. In the same year the Government presented to the Mennonites an old fort, called Cantonment, where they

could establish a second station. Missionary Haury went to the new station and H. R. Voth took charge of Darlington. A few years later a number of children were placed in school at Halstead but after two years they were removed to the farm of Rev. Chr. Krehbiel, who was then the president of the Mission Board. Not long afterwards the plan of educating Indian children in separate schools was given up and the missionaries began to devote their attention especially to the people in their camps.

**The work among the Indians** was particularly difficult. First, their language was hard to learn; then they lived a nomadic life and with their "tepees" were now here now there. Above all they were given to certain heathenish practices and vices which they found hard to give up. Besides, the Indian is very proud and suspicious and holds with great tenacity to the traditions of his ancestors. Various kinds of dances form an important part of his religion.

**Because of such difficulties** results came slowly. The children in the schools learned English songs and Bible stories and many seemed eager to lead a better life. Some of them died quite young, yet in their last moments gave evidence that what they had learned of Jesus was not altogether without effect. Even the older Indians in their dying moments were not indifferent when they were told of the Gospel.

**In 1893 Missionary H. R. Voth** was sent to Arizona to establish a mission among the Hopi Indians, and J. S. Krehbiel was left in charge of the station at Darlington. A few years later this station was given up, owing largely to the individual allotments of land by

the Government and the consequent removal of many of the Indians. At Cantonment, where a large building had been erected, the work was carried on for a little while longer. When the Government started a school there and the Indians were removed to their allotments near Canton, the mission station followed them. For a number of years Missionary J. A. Funk, assisted by a native helper, William Meek, has been in charge of this station. He, however, after 25 years of service, has resigned from active work and will leave the mission field. The station at Canton is now the only one where mission work is carried on among the Arapahoes by the Mennonites. In two other places work was carried on for several years. One station was on the Washita in charge of J. J. Kliever, and the other in the Red Hills, not far from the site of Geary, in charge of J. S. Krehbiel.

Among the Cheyennes Missionary Rudolf Petter, who had come from Switzerland, began work in 1891. He took up his residence at Cantonment and from there visited the Indians in their tepees. A part of the tribe of the Cheyennes, with about 3,500 members, had been compelled by the Government to remove from Montana to the Indian Territory. Because of this forcible removal they were in very bad humor for a long time and Petter won their confidence with great difficulty. Right at the start he devoted himself to the study of the difficult language, but the Indians put all sorts of hindrances into his way. Finally, however, he succeeded in winning them over and got them to listen to the message of salvation and to help him in his language study. In 1897 five persons were baptized and a congregation was organized. In the course

of time Missionary Petter has become quite proficient in the use of the Cheyenne language and has translated the gospels of Luke and John and other portions of the Scriptures, also Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress and some hymns. He wrote a Cheyenne grammar and compiled an English-Cheyenne dictionary. In this work he had the able assistance of his wife, formerly Miss Kinsinger, who has been in the mission field for over 20 years.

At the present time, active mission work among the Cheyennes is done at Cantonment by Albert Claassen, assisted by Agnes Williams, and at Hammon, since 1898, by H. J. Kliever. At Clinton, M. M. Horsch began the work and was followed in succession by G. A. Linscheid, J. H. Epp, and J. B. Ediger, who is still in the field. At Fonda the work was taken up in 1916 by H. T. Neufeld, who had been in Montana a short time but was sent to Oklahoma when Missionary Petter was compelled to seek a northern climate on account of his health. The missionaries assisted by several native workers, have labored with some degree of success, and at all the stations small congregations have been organized.

Mission work among the Cheyennes in Montana was begun in 1904. Missionary Petter had before made several visits there with the purpose of investigating conditions. As he spoke the Cheyenne language as no other white man had ever spoken it, he was well received by the Indians. He found conditions favorable for a new field and a station was established at Busby and placed in charge of G. A. Linscheid, who was transferred here from Clinton, Oklahoma. Later a sub-



station was started on the Upper Rosebud river. Since 1918 Alfred Habegger is also at work at Busby. In 1910 stations were opened at Lame Deer and Birney. At the former place Alfred Wiebe was in charge for a short time, but was compelled to leave because of ill health. In 1916 Missionary Petter came from Oklahoma and took charge of the place. Birney has been in charge of P. A. Kliewer since the beginning. He also takes care of the substation at Ashland.

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#### 41. MISSIONS AMONG THE HOPIS (General Conference.)

**Among the Hopis in Arizona** Missionary H. R. Voth established a station in 1893 at Oraibi. This station is situated in a sandy valley about 65 miles from the railroad. Under great difficulties the missionary built his house and dug a well. Soon the Indians came down from their "mesa" to get water and medicine and friendly relations were established.

**The Hopis** most likely are descendants of the cliff-dwellers, consequently belong to the oldest and most intelligent of the aborigines of this country. For centuries they have lived upon plateaus from 400 to 600 feet high, called "mesas". They are not far from the famous Grand Canyon. Their earlier history is shrouded in vague legends. They have seven villages on three mesas, with about 2,000 inhabitants. At Oraibi there is also a government school and not far away are the ruins of an old Spanish cloister. The Hopis differ much from other Indians in their mode of life. They are entirely self-supporting. The men do the work in

the fields, make the clothing and supply most of the fire wood. The women are the carriers of water, do the house work, grind the flour and perform other kinds of menial labor.

**The religion of the Hopis** consists chiefly of numerous prayers, songs, dances and mysterious ceremonies of some of which they themselves no longer know the meaning. These ceremonies are all in charge of priests and certain secret societies. A prominent feature is the worship of the "Katzinas", who they say are the mediators between the people and the gods. But as they are not on earth now, they are represented by Indians wearing masks. They are also represented by dolls given to the children. The snake dances, performed in the summer, are most horrible. They have often been attended by many white tourists, some of great prominence, Roosevelt, for example. With many songs and dances the Indians catch poisonous snakes, wash them, take them into their mouths and dance around with them. After the ceremony the snakes are carried away and set free. The purpose of most of the ceremonies seems to be to petition the gods for rain and to remove anything that might hinder its coming.

**The work among these Indians** proved to be very difficult and in the earlier years was attended by little apparent result. Just as among other tribes the soil had to be prepared before it could receive the seed. The missionaries spent much time and effort in learning the language and getting acquainted with the religion of this tribe. In this respect the missionaries met with a high degree of success. They wrote a Hopi dictionary and a grammar and translated parts of the Bible and about 100 Gospel Hymns. They also gath-

ered much valuable information regarding the religion of the Hopis.

**On the 21st of August 1904**, a girl named Lillie Talawenka was baptized by Missionary J. B. Frey. She was the first one to take this step and because of it had to suffer much persecution from her people. The Hopis at first believed that if anyone was baptized, he would soon die, or it would keep the rain from coming. Not long after the girl had been baptized there came a welcome rain and proved that the Indians were wrong in their belief.

**After ten years** of service among the Hopis, Missionary H. R. Voth felt obliged to leave the mission field. Before his departure however, J. B. Epp arrived, and with Voth's assistance began to study the language. Next came J. B. Frey and in 1905 took up the work at Moen Copi, about fifty miles from Oraibi. Another missionary, C. J. Frey, came a little later, but after a comparatively short time he fell sick and died. Trouble between the so-called "friendly" and "unfriendly" Indians brought an interruption in the mission work and gave rise to several new villages. Owing to the sickness and consequent death of his wife, J. B. Epp also discontinued his work. His place at Oraibi was taken by J. R. Duerksen, who in 1914 continued his work at Pakavi and Hotevilla. At the former place Maria Schirmer had been working for some years among the women and continued her work there until the present year (1919). At Oraibi Mr. and Mrs. Holcomb, from the Navajo mission, did good service after Missionary Duerksen had left. At present Elizabeth Schmidt is at Oraibi, where for the past years she has

devoted herself entirely to the care of several orphan children. Carl Friesen and his wife have gone there recently.

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## 42. MISSIONS IN INDIA.

(General Conference.)

In the years 1897-1899 India experienced one of its periodical famines. The report of the terrible suffering induced the Mennonites to send help, and a cargo of 8,000 bushels of grain was distributed under the supervision of Rev. David Goerz. But it did not seem right to relieve the physical hunger of the poor people and let their souls starve. The decision was soon reached to send them also the bread of eternal life. In the year 1900 the missionaries P. A. Penner and J. F. Kroeker arrived at Bombay. At first they went to Dhamtari, where the Old Mennonites had established a mission two years before, and there began the study of the Hindu language and gathered useful knowledge for their work. After some investigations they selected Champa and Janjgir in the Central Province as the seat of their stations. At the beginning their attention was largely given to the care of orphans caused by the terrible famine. The girls were taken care of at Champa by Penner and the boys at Janjgir by Kroeker. Later, however, the girls were also placed at Janjgir and the boys removed to the new station Mauhadei. Very early Missionary Penner saw the need of an asylum for lepers, and in 1902 made a small beginning by receiving a few lepers and allowing them

to live in huts especially built for them. In the course of years the work has grown to such proportions that he now cares for over 200 patients. The asylum is liberally supported by a society in Great Britain.

**The girls' orphanage at Janjgir** has also assumed larger proportions. Missionary P. W. Penner was stationed there and had direct supervision of the work. At present he with his wife is in the United States on furlough. On account of the war they have not yet received permission to return. For several years the girls were under the immediate care of Annie C. Funk. In 1912 she was on her way home for a needed rest and took passage from England on the ill-fated steamer Titanic. On April 15 the vessel struck an iceberg and Miss Funk, with many others found a grave in the cold waves of the Atlantic. In memory of her faithful service and her tragic death a building has been erected at Janjgir which is known as "The Annie C. Funk Memorial." Since then Anna Braun has been in charge of the girls, but is now also on furlough. During the absence of Missionary Penner and Miss Braun the station is under the care of Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Steiner and Martha Burkhalter. At Mauhadei, where work was begun in 1911, P. J. Wiens and his wife are the missionaries. Here as at the other stations, a congregation of native Christians has been organized. At this place the boys' orphanage is located. The latest station established is at Korba (1915) where Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Suckau are at work. In the summer of 1919 Noah Burkhalter and his wife also were sent to India.



### 43. MISSIONS IN CHINA.

(General Conference.)

**China** is a large country where millions of heathen have not yet come under the influence of the Gospel of Jesus. For a long time it has challenged the attention of the followers of Christ who would heed his command, "Go ye into all the world." Among those to whom the call of the benighted country appeared insistent was H. J. Braun. In 1911 he, with his wife, went to China and opened a mission station at Kai Chow, Chihli. In the beginning they were supported by individual friends and churches. A few years later, however, the General Conference assumed the care and responsibility of the field. Additional workers were found willing to enter the service. Talitha Neufeld joined the missionaries at Kai Chow and prepared herself especially for school work. E. G. Kaufman and wife, together with Aganeta Fast, also entered the field and are now at Kai Chow while Missionary Brauns are on furlough. In 1916 another station was established by Mr. and Mrs. P. J. Boehr at Tung Ming Hsien, where they since have been laboring with success. In the summer of 1918 Sisters Christina Habegger and Meta Sprunger entered the field and in the present summer (1919) S. J. Goering and W. C. Voth, with their wives, have also been sent there.

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As already mentioned in another place, congregations of native Christians have been organized at practically all the stations under the control of the General Conference. The number of converts in the various

fields at the present time is as follows: Oklahoma, 175; Montana, 157; Arizona, 31; India, 521; China, 89; thus making a total of 973 in all the fields. The work in these missions is carried on by 19 missionaries and their wives. They are assisted by 9 unmarried sisters and 83 native helpers. The work and the influence of the wives of the missionaries deserve special mention. Only they, in many cases, find it possible to enter the households and bring the message of salvation to the women.

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#### 44. MISSIONS OF THE CENTRAL CONFERENCE AND DEFENCELESS MENNONITES.

The active missionary work of the Central Conference of Mennonites began at the annual conference held at Meadows, Illinois, September 14, 1905. As a result of two strong missionary addresses given by Alma Doering, a returned missionary, and Charles E. Hurlburt, president and director of the African Inland Mission, it was decided that the Central Conference should do some definite work in Africa. On December 1, 1905, a temporary missionary organization was formed. It was decided to send three missionaries into British East Africa, in the field controlled by the African Inland Mission. In the year 1906 the first two missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence B. Haigh, were sent, and in the fall of 1907 four additional missionaries were sent out, namely, Jesse Raynor, L. S. Probst, Miss Schoenhut and Miss Laura Collins. It was found unsatisfactory to work under the jurisdiction of the African Inland Mission. In the year 1909 steps were

taken towards selecting some other field in Africa. In the same year the Missionary Board was incorporated under the state laws of Illinois. The corporate name of this board is "The Central Mennonite Board of Home and Foreign Missions."

**The Defenceless Mennonites** first sent out Miss Mathilde Kohm in 1897 as their missionary. She was then laboring under the direction of the Missionary Alliance. In 1900 Miss Kohm was again sent to the field and was accompanied by Alma E. Doering, laboring this time under the Swedish Missionary Society. In 1905 work was begun in British East Africa under the direction of the African Inland Mission. Alma Doering and Marie Schneider were sent out and a little later Emil Sywulka, also Amos Oyer and Julia Oyer and Anna Zimmerman. Good success attended the work of the missionaries, but the field seemed to be somewhat congested, so investigations were made for a new field.

**In 1911 the Congo Inland Mission** was organized by members of both the Central Mennonites and the Defenceless Mennonites, and the late Alvin J. Stevenson was first sent to the Congo about 1,000 miles inland to investigate and find a suitable territory. Soon after Stevenson's departure for the field, L. B. Haigh and his wife were sent and they helped to establish the new stations Djoka Punda and Kalambe in the Kassai district. But it was not long after the locating of these stations that Missionary Stevenson took sick and died. Since then Haigh has been superintendent of the mission and the work is prospering at both stations. The following missionaries are now on the field: L. B. Haigh and wife, Miss Sprunger, and E. A. Sommer and wife at Djoka Punda; J. P. Barkman and wife

at Kalambe. Aaron A. Janzen, William Kensinger and their wives and Omar Sutton are on their way to the field, having sailed January 25, 1919. Anna Zimmerman is still laboring for the African Inland Mission at Kijabe, but is expected to return home soon on her second furlough. Mr. and Mrs. Barkman are also expected to return soon on a furlough.

**The Home Missionary activity** of the Central Conference began with the opening of the present Mennonite Chapel in Chicago under the leadership of Rev. A. B. Rutt. The present superintendent is Rev. E. T. Rowe. He is assisted by three helpers. In the year 1915 the Peoria Gospel Mission was opened under the leadership of Rev. Jacob Sommer. He has two helpers.

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#### 45. MISSIONS OF THE MENNONITE BRETHREN IN CHRIST.

**The foreign mission efforts** of this body of Mennonites date back to about 1887, when Eusebius Hershey from Pennsylvania went to Africa. He took no associates with him and had no organization back of him. He soon succumbed to the deadly African climate. His heroism and sacrifice awakened missionary interest in the churches and the work has been progressing ever since. The following are the names of the stations with the number of missionaries engaged at each place: Africa, Central Northern Nigeria, 13; China, Kausu Province, 8; India, Lambak and Igatpuri, 3; South America, Argentine and Chile, 11; Asiatic Turkey, Armenia, 9. The work in South America has been carried on in connection with the Christian and Missionary

Alliance. In the other places, with the exception of India it has been conducted by various boards representing different conferences of this branch of Mennonites. The work in Armenia was carried on chiefly in schools and orphanages. The boys were taken care of at Erevan and the girls at Hadjin—about 500 altogether. Both places had to be closed on account of the war but are expected to be reopened when conditions warrant.

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#### 46. MISSIONS OF THE MENNONITE BRETHREN OF NORTH AMERICA.

During the earlier years the Mennonite Brethren Church in this country, supported no mission of its own, but proved active in supporting missionary enterprises in different countries by sending liberal contributions of money. Visits from returned missionaries kindled interest in foreign missions more and more, and in 1884 the Annual Conference voted to support a native missionary in India. In the following year they elected a committee on foreign missions and agreed to support two native missionaries. Two years later they decided to support a native missionary in Kamerun, Africa, also one in India in connection with the Mennonite Brethren of Russia. These arrangements continued in force to about 1898.

Among the Comanches in Oklahoma work was begun in 1894 by H. Kohfeld. This tribe numbers about 1500 people and lives in the Wichita mountains about 25 miles west of Fort Sill. Missionary Kohfeld succeeded in purchasing 160 acres of land for a mission sta-



tion. The purchase was made possible by the good will of the wife of an Indian. She said to her husband, "If you do not sell the land to the white man, my heart can never be happy."

**The work among the Comanches** proved to be difficult. Like all Indians they hold fast to their heathen ideas and are slow to see the truths of the Christian religion. They are strongly held by the evil influences of the mescal bean, which causes a sort of intoxication and the use of which forms an important part of their heathenish rites. They claim that it enables them to commune with the Great Spirit. In spite of the difficulties, however, the work was continued and additional workers were sent out. First came Mary Regier, who has since been called to her heavenly reward. Then in 1901 came A. J. Becker and in the following year Katherine Penner. After twelve years of faithful service Missionary Kohfeld retired. His work brought its fruit after he had left. After thirteen years of apparently useless labor converts came and asked for baptism, so that at the present time the congregation numbers about fifty members. The work is now carried on by Rev. and Mrs. Becker and Mary Heinrichs.

**In India.** In 1887 the Conference asked the Committee on Foreign Missions to look for a field and find the necessary workers. A field was found in the Decan, India. It has about 2,000 villages and about 1,000,000 inhabitants. It lies in the province Hyderabad, having a capital of the same name. In 1899 N. N. Hiebert and wife, accompanied by Elizabeth Neufeld, sailed as the first missionaries to this large field. Soon, however, Hiebert was forced to return home because of ill health and Miss Neufeld was joined by

Anna Sudermann, who had previously worked in the mission of the Russian Mennonite Brethren. The people at home were aroused to greater sacrifices by the addresses of Missionary Hiebert, and as a result, in 1902, J. H. Pankratz and his wife answered the call to India. Two years later they were followed by Rev. and Mrs. D. F. Bergthold and in 1906 by a medical missionary, Dr. Katherine Schellenberg. Then, in 1908, Rev. and Mrs. J. H. Voth, accompanied by Katherine Lohrenz, entered the field, the latter to take the place of Miss Neufeld, who had returned home because of ill health. Next Rev. and Mrs. F. A. Janzen responded, and in 1915 they were followed by Anna Hanneman and Mary Wall. Altogether at present there are four stations with four families of missionaries, three single workers and about a hundred native helpers. The medical work is made more efficient by a hospital at Nagar Kurnool.

**The missionaries** had to go through many bitter experiences. Besides sickness and death there was the opposition of the Mohammedans. Because of their jealousy it became necessary to move the site of the main station, which was near Hyderabad, to another place. Yet all these hardships, sad experiences and obstacles do not prevent the success of the work. In fact, they make the workers the more devoted and zealous, and the result is seen in the increase of the number of the converts. There is now a total membership of over 2,100 native Christians.

**The Mennonite Brethren** have also a few representatives in the great field of China. F. J. Wiens always had a special desire to carry the Gospel to the people

there. But the Conferences did not wish to assume any more responsibilities, since they had all they could do in India. Nevertheless, Mr. and Mrs. Wiens responded to the inner call and in 1910 went to China and started mission work in the province of Shong Hong. They have been blessed in their work and have organized a congregation of Chinese Christians. Most of the funds for the support of this work come from individual members of the Mennonite Brethren church. The Conference, however, owns the mission property and also contributes liberally to the support of the work. In all probability it will assume complete responsibility in the near future.

Besides the missionaries mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs, there are others at work under the auspices of other missionary societies.

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#### 47. MISSIONS OF THE KRIMMER MENNONITE BRETHREN.

In the year 1900 H. V. Wiebe began mission work among the negroes at Elk Park in North Carolina. A Miss Pruden had started a school there, but because of opposition of the Whites against all efforts to educate the negroes, had to give up her work. The bulidings, with some land, were purchased from her and Wiebe started a school and orphanage. The Whites tried to frighten him away also, but he continued in his work undaunted. He finally gained the good will and the confidence not only of the negroes but also of the Whites. In the summer of 1904 he had twenty children in the orphanage and was privileged to baptize ten persons. The work gradually grew so that besides

taking care of the main station at Elk Park they are holding meetings at four other places. At Elk Park a church was built jointly with the Baptists and is used together with them. At Boone they have a church of their own. Their total membership is about 60 at present. Some time ago Wiebe retired from the field and his place was taken by Joseph W. Tschetter, who has since supervised the work. J. H. Morrison holds meetings at various places and during three months in the summer teaches a school. The work among the negroes has been signally blessed and has increased in spite of difficulties.

**Missions in China.** Mission work among the Chinese was begun in 1905 at Tsao Hsien. The first ones to enter the field were Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Bartel, who have faithfully served until the present time. Among those that followed later were J. Schmidt, P. Balzer, P. Kiehm, J. J. Schrag, and G. K. Willem. The last mentioned went to China in 1918. Since the beginning the work has increased to such an extent that, according to a recent report, there are now seven main stations, 29 missionaries and 38 native helpers. The native Christians exceed 300 in number. Missionary efforts are directed not only towards preaching the Gospel, but extensive work is done also in taking care of orphans and of aged people.

**Besides the missions among the negroes and in China,** some work has been done in Mexico and in Africa. Adolf Nick has been laboring among the Mexicans, sometimes in Old Mexico and sometimes in the Border States, and F. E. Hein was engaged in spreading the light of the Gospel among some of the natives of Africa.

#### 48. MISSIONS OF THE OLD MENNONITES

Among the people of this branch of Mennonites interest in foreign missions was aroused by the dreadful famine that raged in India in 1897. They first sent help in the form of shiploads of grain, but soon took hold of the opportunity to bring to the starving natives the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In 1899 J. A. Ressler and W. B. Page went to India and selected Dhamtari as the site of their first station. At the beginning much of their work consisted in taking care of homeless orphan children. Soon their activities expanded and made the founding of other stations possible. Dr. Page and his wife soon returned home because of ill health. Ressler, however, remained and retained the supervision for a number of years. At present there are several stations with a total of about 600 converts. Twelve missionaries are now in the field and seven are on furlough.

In more recent years the eyes of these brethren have been directed to South America. In 1916 T. K. Hershey and J. H. Shank, accompanied by their families, went to this continent to open a new mission field. They are stationed at present at Buenos Aires, Argentina.



## IMPORTANT DATES FOR REVIEW.

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- 67 Death of the apostles Peter and Paul.
- 100 Death of the apostle John.
- 167 Martyrdom of Bishop Polycarpus.
- 200 Tertullian active in North Africa.
- 250 Bloody persecution of Christians under Decius.
- 323 Constantine the Great makes Christianity the state religion.
- 385 Execution of Priscillian—punishment of the first “heretic.”
- 430 Augustine, bishop of Hippo Regius, dies.
- 739 Death of Bishop Claudius of Turin.
- 755 Boniface, the apostle of the Germans, is killed.
- 1073 Pope Gregory VII.
- 1170 Conversion of Peter Waldus.
- 1209 Beginning of the war against the heretics in Southern France.
- 1415 Huss is burned at Constance.
- 1458 Bishop Reiser is burned at Strassburg.
- 1467 The Bohemian Brethren introduce adult baptism.
- 1483 Birth of Martin Luther.
- 1492 Birth of Menno Simons at Witmarsum in Frisia.
- 1517 Luther publishes his 95 theses.
- 1525 Organization of an Anabaptist congregation at Zurich.
- 1527 Hans Denk dies at Basel.
- 1528 Balthasar Hubmeier is burned at Vienna.
- 1536 Menno Simons leaves the Roman Catholic Church.
- 1559 Menno Simons dies at the age of 67 years.
- 1560 Large immigration of Mennonites into West Prussia.
- 1586 First meeting house of the Prussian Mennonites near Graudenz.
- 1597 Anna von Hoff, last martyr in Holland.
- 1605 Marcus Eder and Hans Polzinger, last martyrs in South Germany.
- 1614 Hans Landis, last martyr in Switzerland.

- 1618 Beginning of the Thirty Years' War.
- 1660 Mennonites in Holland give help to the persecuted Baptists in Switzerland.
- 1683 Founding of Germantown by Mennonites from Crefeld.
- 1757 Prussian congregations begin to use the German language.
- 1759 Johann Deknatel dies at Amsterdam.
- 1760 Death of Zinzendorf.
- 1847 Founding of the Dutch Missionary Society.
- 1880 Beginning of Mennonite Mission among the Indians.

# INDEX.

---

I. The First Centuries	Page
1. Introduction .....	6
2. The Apostles .....	7
3. The Conduct of the Christians .....	10
4. Persecutions .....	12
5. Martyrs .....	13
6. Noted Teachers .....	16
7. Constantine the Great .....	19
8. The Church Fathers .....	20

II. The Middle Ages	
9. Errors .....	23
10. Early Reformers .....	25
11. The Islam .....	27
12. The Gospel in Germany .....	29
13. Papacy .....	32
14. The Crusades .....	34
15. The Dark Ages .....	36
16. The Waldenses .....	38
17. Persecutions of the Waldenses .....	42
18. Forerunners of the Reformation .....	44

III. The Period of Reformation.	
19. Luther and Zwingli .....	47
20. The Anabaptists in Switzerland .....	51
21. Hans Denk .....	53
22. Balthasar Hubmeier .....	56
23. Persecutions of the Anabaptists in South Germany .....	59
24. Jacob Hutter .....	62
25. Menno Simons .....	65
26. Persecution of the Mennonites in the Netherlands .....	68
27. The Reformation in Other Lands .....	71

#### IV. The New Era

28.	The Wars of Religion .....	74
29.	Spener and Francke .....	76
30.	Zinzendorf and the United Brethren .....	79
31.	Bible and Mission Societies .....	82
32.	The Mennonites in Holland .....	85
33.	The Mennonites in Prussia .....	88
34.	The Mennonites in Russia .....	91
35.	The Mennonites in Switzerland .....	94
36.	The Mennonites and Anabaptists in Moravia and South Germany .....	97
37.	The Mennonites in America .....	100

#### V. Mennonite Foreign Missions

38.	Java .....	104
39.	Sumatra .....	107
40.	Among the Arapahoes and Cheyennes .....	111
41.	Missions Among the Hopis .....	116
42.	Missions in India .....	119
43.	Missions in China .....	121
44.	Missions of the Central Conference and Defenceless Mennonites .....	122
45.	Missions of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ .....	124
46.	Missions of the Mennonite Brethren of North America .....	125
47.	Missions of the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren .....	128
48.	Missions of the Old Mennonites .....	130













